BINGANG

Club Crosby Our 65th Year *Summer 2001*

Subscription Information

Most of you have paid your dues for 2001, but some have not. On your mailing label, directly above your name, is the date your membership expires. We would appreciate payment as soon as possible after that date, please! ☞ ☐ If this box is checked in red, payment is overdue! ☜

If the club is to remain financially stable, it is necessary that all members pay dues on a regular basis. We would not like to drop any members for non-payment, but it may become necessary to do so. If any of you are no longer interested in receiving *Bingang,* please drop us a note or postcard.

Please follow these instructions for payment of dues:

TO OUR MEMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Send a check or money order for $12.00, made out to Club Crosby, to:

Wayne Martin, Editor *Bingang*
435 So. Holmes Ave.
Kirkwood, MO 63122-6311

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TO OUR MEMBERS IN EUROPE

Ken W. Crossland of W. Midlands, England, is our European representative. He collects dues and does the mailing of *Bingang* for Europe and the British Isles. Magazines are air-mailed to Ken in bulk from the U.S. He distributes them by regular mail to the members. Dues are $18.00 and must be submitted to Ken *in £ sterling an amount equivalent to $18.00 U.S (£12 U.K.).* Please do not make payment to Ken in U. S. dollars. Send dues or notice of non-receipt of *Bingang* to:

Ken W. Crossland
9 Arden Drive
Dorridge, Solihull
W. Midlands B93 8LP, England

Checks or money orders should be made out to K. W. Crossland.

TO OUR MEMBERS IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTH AMERICA

We cannot accept foreign currency or personal checks, as it is too difficult and expensive to get them cashed. Money orders or bank drafts must specify payment in U.S. dollars. Personal checks will be returned, unhonored. Dues are $18.00, and journals are sent airmail. Send your remittance, made out to Club Crosby, to:

Wayne L. Martin, Editor, *Bingang*
435 So. Holmes Ave.
Kirkwood, MO 63122-6311 U.S.A.

ADDRESSES OF CONTRIBUTING AND ASSOCIATE EDITORS AND SECRETARY

Dieter Pressler, 1004 Commercial Ave. #331, Anacortes, WA 98221. E-mail: dbpressler@mailbug.com
Charles D. Baillie, 118 W. Las Flores Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007. E-mail: bingsings@aol.com
Pete Cakanic, 11 Teal Court, North Augusta, SC 29841. E-mail: bingfan@earthlink.net
David Lobosco, 230 Oakwood Ave., Apt. 3, Pittsburgh, PA 15229 . E-mail: lobosco74@yahoo.com
Greg Van Beek, 3006 Emerald, West Bend, WI 53095. E-mail: tvanbeek@execpc.com
Crissi Newton, 120 Sawmill Rd., Lake Providence, LA 71254. E-mail: crissin@bayou.com

Front cover: Bing ignores a "No Loafing on Streets" sign in Front Royal, VA during his stay there for the premiere of "Riding High" on April 1, 1950. The day was known as "Bing Crosby Day" in Front Royal. Photo courtesy of Jon Oye.

EDITOR/VICE PRESIDENT
Wayne L. Martin
435 So. Holmes Ave.
Kirkwood, MO 63122

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Dieter B. Pressler

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Charles Baillie
Peter Cakanic
David Lobosco
Greg Van Beek

SECRETARY
Crissi Newton

HONORARY PRESIDENT
Kathryn Crosby

Club Crosby
E-Mail: ClubCrosby@aol.com

Bingang

Bing Crosby Internet Museum
www.kcmetro.cc.mo.us/~crosby/
(Set up and maintained by Steven Lewis)

PRESIDENT
Mark Scrimger
10450 Six-Mile Rd. #246
Battle Creek, MI 49014

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Table of Contents

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION 2
READERS WRITE 4
THE EDITOR'S PAGE 5
BING CROSBY — THE FINAL ROUND
BY GREG VAN BEEK 6
¡EL COMPADRE BING CROSBY! THE LATIN REPERTOIRE, PART 3
BY EDWIN GARCÍA, ESQ. 12
AND THE WINNER IS...
BY MARK SCRIMGER 25
THE MARJORIE REYNOLDS STORY
BY DAVID LOBOSCO 29
BINGING AROUND
BY PETE CAKANIC 31
BING, ELVIS & *GOLDMINE*
BY PETE CAKANIC 32
BCCC 2003
BY DIETER PRESSLER 32
THE DINGBUSTINGEST CONTEST YOU EVER LAID EYES ON
BY LAURA HILLENBRAND 33
GARY GIDDINS' BOOK A SUCCESS, BUT 38
"HAIRY" LILLIS CROSBY 40
CROONER CROSBY'S DEBUT DISC 42
BING IN HOLLYWOOD: *HIGH TIME*
BY DAVID LOBOSCO 43
COMPARING CROSBY, SINATRA
BY NICK CLOONEY 44
"WHITE CHRISTMAS" RANKS NO. 2 44
PERRY COMO IS DEAD
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS 45
BING CROSBY—THE VOICE OF THE CENTURY
BY J. ROGER OSTERHOLM 46
WAX FACTS 48
NELLY BLY— A RECORD & INTERPRETATION
BY GEORGE JEAN NATHAN 49
SOME INTERESTING RECORD LABELS 50
BINGSINGS
BY CHARLES BAILLIE 51
SWAPS AND SUCH 59
BACK COVER 60

This issue is dedicated to Gary Giddins, in honor of his great book, "A Pocketful of Dreams"

Readers Write

Many thanks and congratulations to you and all responsible for the *Bing Crosby Sheet Music* listings. They are a great addition to Crosby lore. I hope even more covers will turn up as a result of your hard work.

It is interesting to relate your listings to the songs on which Bing took writing credit. According to Malcolm Macfarlane's analysis, at least 21 carried his name as a writer. He recorded 15 of the 21. You found sheet music for all but three -- two late ones ("Domenica" and "Sail Away From Norway") and "What Price Lyrics," dating back to the Whiteman days of 1928.

Of the six not recorded by Bing, the most interesting may be "You're Just A Beautiful Melody Of Love" (1932). You found sheet music for that, and the cover suggests that he was entirely responsible for the words. That runs a bit counter to his claims that he simply helped lyricists with a word or two, usually in the introductions. We'll never know, but my guess is that his writing was limited, if only because he was so busy, even in those young days. He obviously had picked up from Al Jolson the pleasant fact that having your name on the song credits resulted in a share of the royalties.

When song writers pitched numbers to him, he may in some cases have touched them up a bit. He did promote "You're Just A Beautiful Melody Of Love" by singing it a couple of times on radio.

He also sang on radio two of the other unrecorded five: "Believe Me" (1931) and "You Taught Me How To Love" (1931).

But the other three numbers he "wrote" in that era ("Cutesy Pie," "Ev'rything's Agreed Upon" and "I Was So Alone, Suddenly You Were There") wound up as orphans — no recordings, no radio play and, now we know, no extant sheet music. Maybe he sang them at the Cocoanut Grove. Sheet music publishers welcomed personal performances, too.

It is interesting to look at the first three years of his solo stardom — 1931, 1932 and 1933. Those were still busy days in the sheet music world. Publishers slapped on their covers pictures and names to attract buyers.

Your list shows how quickly they latched onto Crosby as a cover boy. His picture or at least his name was on 29 copyrighted songs for 1931, 52 for 1932 and 40 for 1933. (A few were songs he began singing years later, producing a new printing of covers using his picture. But most of the sheet music was obviously contemporaneous.)

Of the 121 songs in '31, '32 and '33 linked to him by eager sheet music publishers, he cut commercial recordings at the time of only 35. His connection to some of the other 86 songs was more tenuous, yet the Crosby name certainly helped sell them.

He used some of the songs on his radio broadcasts. He did go back in later years and record a few of the early '30s numbers he had missed at the time. (As examples, "Don't Blame Me" and "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You.")

Some came from his films, but may not have been songs he performed on screen. He recorded "Black Moonlight" for example, but we're told it was sung in the Crosby film *Too Much Harmony* by Barbara Van Brunt, dubbing Kitty Kelly.

No doubt some of the covers were simply of songs the publisher thought Crosby should have sung, even if he didn't.

As a further switch, Bing recorded "St. Louis Blues" (1914) with Duke Ellington in 1932, but judging from your list, was not shown on the sheet music cover until 1941, when a new printing was made in connection with Crosby's performance of the song in his film *Birth Of The Blues.*

The 1931 Rhythm Boys cover on "Hello, Beautiful" that you found is an example of the speculation your listing raises. It was certainly a popular Maurice Chevalier song at the time, but did the Rhythm Boys sing it and, if so with Bing? Most records seem to show Crosby not singing it until a 1947 radio broadcast with Chevalier.

I suppose the Rhythm Boys picture could have put on a later printing that carried the original copyright date of 1931, but why do that?

Your research is going to stir up more study, and that's excellent. It's a fabulous job, and I congratulate you again on it.

— BOB ACHORN, Sutton, Massachusetts.

Editor's Note: *Bing Crosby Sheet Music,* announced in the winter issue, and finally completed just recently, is available to members for $5.00 ($7.00 in U. S. funds for copies sent by airmail to overseas addresses). The front cover has a collage of sheet music covers from all over the world. The listing consists of 19 closely-typed, double-column pages listing about 1200 titles, many of these titles being available in several different editions. The listing is based on the extensive collections of Marilee Stankowski, Mark Scrimger and Charlie Baillie. It will be updated from time to time as new information becomes available. It is a bargain at the price asked, considering the many hours of work Mark, Marilee and Charlie (and your editor) put into the project. W.M.

The Editor's Page

COMMITTEE CHOSEN. A committee to study and decide on the procedure for the change of officers in 2003 has been chosen and is at work on the options available to us. The members are: Mark Scrimger, President; Wayne Martin, Vice-President and Editor; Charlie Baillie, Pete Cakanic, David Lobosco and Greg Van Beek, Contributing Editors; Dieter Pressler, Associate Editor; Crissi Newton, Secretary; and Ken Crossland, European Representative. In addition we have asked Priscilla Koernig, former officer of the Club, for her thoughts on certain matters pertaining to our decisions.

We will be discussing ways the Club can be run more efficiently without too big a load being placed on any one person. To have one individual edit and type the magazine, see it through the printers, address, stuff and stamp the mailing envelopes, keep track of membership dues and do most of the Club's correspondence is not a very desirable or practical way to handle our business.

We are also discussing the possibility of a merger with the International Crosby Circle. Preliminary talks with Malcolm Macfarlane, editor of *Bing*, and "Wig" Wiggins, the ICC's American representative (and a long-time member of Club Crosby) have dealt with the necessity of preserving Club Crosby's history, its American influence and input, our Club's and our newsletter's names, and the desirability of having American officers as well as overseas officers in place.

We also need the membership's views on these issues. You may write or e-mail any of the committee members you choose, and we will share the information with the others. Their mailing and e-mail addresses are on the inside cover and Table of Contents page in this issue. Your input will be appreciated,

WE HAVE A SECRETARY! We are pleased to announce that Crissi Newton has accepted the position of Club Secretary, effective immediately. Crissi will be in charge of the club's correspondence and will be sending out the thank-you notes and other everyday correspondence. Your President and Editor will continue to deal with club policies, membership dues, and newsletter matters. Thank you, Crissi, for taking on this responsibility.

OVERSEAS DUES INCREASED. We are sorry to announce that we have had to increase the overseas dues from $16 to $18. The reason for this is the sudden increase in the cost of overseas mailings. For example, what used to cost $3.75 to mail a newsletter to Australia now costs $5.35. This is because the post office threw out the "printed matter' and half-ounce rates, and mail is now weighed in full "air letter" ounces — 80 cents an ounce! Many of the fan clubs in this country are griping about the increase, but there doesn't seem to be any chance of the post office paying any attention to these complaints. Being the monopoly it is, the post office does what it wants, and to heck with the public. To make matters worse, the service continues to deteriorate. A package of the winter issues of *Bingang* sent to our European Representative took five weeks to get there — and that was by airmail! We could also get much better service than we do in the U.S.A. What used to take one or two days to deliver often takes three or four days. Something is wrong!

THANK YOU! A big thank you goes to those who contributed extra money to the club from December until July1: Jim Allen, Paul Barstow, James Bauman, Mary Boyer, Herb Brady, Charles Campbell, Joseph Clay, Michael Collins, Joseph D'Addario, Caroline Dawson, Anthony DiFlorio, Marlin Dornbush, Laurence Doyle, Charles Drabenstot, Virgil Edwards, David Feiereisen, Sam Fleshman, David Frankham, Claire Grainger, Herb Heki, R. W. Hendricks, Ron Holmes, Malcolm Holt, Colin Kidd, Larry Kieran, Marcie Kukla, Peter LaCava, Donald Lamb, Robert Larsson, Joyce Lundberg, Ken MacGregor, Harold Maruca, James McCusker, Roger Mesiano, Mary Montalto, Donald Mounce, Nick Nardella, Dolores Onarato, Girvan Paterson, Dieter Pressler, James Raley, David Robbins, Frank Rogers, John Sarro, Wayne Sharnick, John Shaw, Aldo Silengo, Kelly Smith, Robert Stagnaro, Barry Stapleton, Robert Stratiff, Ernest Sutkowski, Helen Tolton, Greg Van Beek, Charles Vincent, Stanley Wayman, F. B. Wiggins, and Gerald Wilson.

We try to write personal thank-you notes to all people who contribute $3.00 or more above the amount of dues. If we don't always follow this policy, please excuse us for our lapses and know that all donations, large and small, are very deeply appreciated!

PERRY COMO'S DEATH. All of us were saddened by the death of Perry Como. He was one of the truly great entertainers of the 20th century. In this issue, on page 45, you will find a nice article from the editor's local newspaper, and there are tributes by Charlie Baillie (page 58) and Pete Cakanic (page 31).

Does anybody know what happened to the Perry Como Circle, his fan club? We used to exchange newsletters but have not received an issue for quite some time.

See you next winter!

Wayne

Bing Crosby — The Final Round

Francisco Prieto's Journey to La Moraleja Golf Course in Madrid, Spain

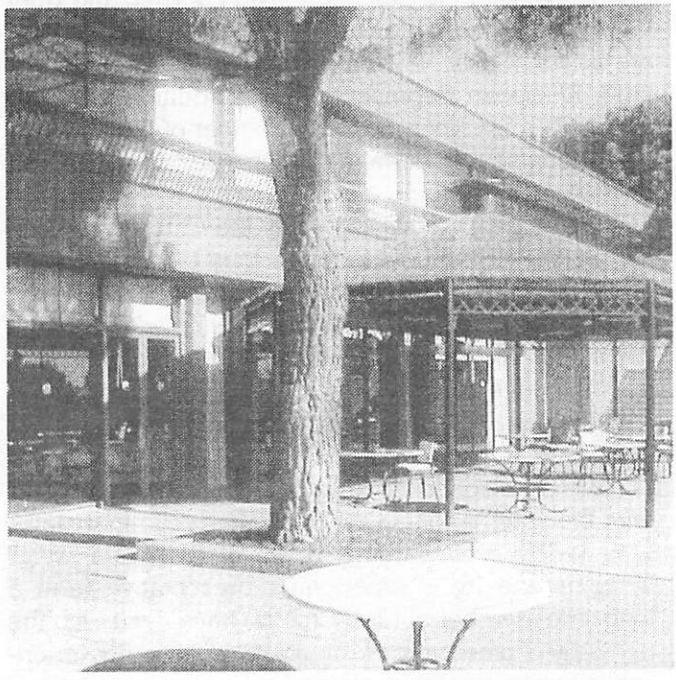
By Greg Van Beek

WHAT FOLLOWS is an account of Bing Crosby's last round of golf and his subsequent death on October 14, 1977. It reveals for the first time his true last words, the last song he sang, what he ate for his final meal, and other fascinating bits of trivia, enhanced by many new and never-before-seen photos. All was revealed by one of Bing's opponents during that final round, the last person to speak to him alive, Mr. Valentin Barrios, and is told in the setting where it all took place, La Moraleja Golf Course near Madrid, Spain.

This remarkable story was made possible by a good friend of my family and me, Francisco Prieto. I have known Francisco for over 15 years through the business dealings he has had with my father. Francisco is a Los Angeles-based representative for a Spanish industrial machinery manufacturer. In that time, we have shared many good times during his frequent visits to Wisconsin, and he has remained a true and loyal friend.

He's known about my interest in Bing Crosby for quite some time now. Knowing he spends a lot of time in Spain, I asked him once if he knew of the La Moraleja Golf Course. He replied, "Yes, I've passed by it many times." Then I told him that Bing died there after a round of golf. He was incredulous; he had no idea! Not wanting to impose, I simply asked if sometime when he was passing by he could pull off to the side of the road and take a photograph of the course for my collection. He did that—and a whole lot more! The story of how this exclusive interview with Valentin Barrios came about is almost as fascinating as the interview itself.

Sign pointing the way to La Moraleja



19th hole bar entrance and patio

To begin with, Francisco surprised me (which is an understatement) with the following e-mail on October 27, 2000: "What a place!!! I arrived in Madrid from Los Angeles on Sunday morning, Oct. 22, around nine as scheduled. I rented a red Seat Ibiza 1.9 SDI-turbo diesel, very nice and pretty fast—smooth for a diesel." (Francisco shares with me a love of automobiles—GVB).

"I drove directly to La Moraleja, which is like a township with some of the most elegant villas, homes and mansions that I have ever seen. Sort of a Beverly Hills of old money and probably some new. I got lost for a while on the many roads leading to the golf course. Finally I found it. There was no guard at the gate, which I thought was unusual; but I went inside, red Ibiza and all, and parked the little car among the S-class Mercedes Benz's, Porches, BMW and even a Chrysler 300M! I walked to the Country Club building.

"Once I was inside a nice (and pretty to match) lady stopped me and asked what I was doing there.

19th hole bar and dining area

Obviously my poor attire did not match the elegance of the place. I explained the story about Bing's fan club. She told me to refrain from photographing anything and kindly gave me the phone number for the Club Manager. She told me to make an appointment to see him and he would (or would not) allow me to photograph the exact place where Bing fell.

"I discretely took the car from the parking lot and left the club. This time the guard was at the gate, and he looked at me as if wondering how a humble 'Seat Ibiza' (a Spanish compact car-GVB) was exiting the premises! Anyway, I guess I was lucky that the guard was absent when I went in."

In a follow-up e-mail later that day, Francisco wrote: "The General Manager (or *Director Gerente* in Spanish) of La Moralaeja Golf now is a Mr. Rafael Silvela de Alos. I have not called him because Madrid is some 220 miles from here [Mondragon, where the Spanish machinery manufacturer is located.] If I can stop there on my return to the States next week, I will contact Mr. Silvela and make an appointment. The problem is that I am sure once I am there he is going to explain the whole thing to me and take me to the different places I want to see. This will probably take the whole morning. Thus, I may leave it for when I come back to Spain in December."

So I was both grateful and amazed at what he had managed to accomplish on my behalf, figuring this would be the end of the story. Boy, was I wrong!

On October 31, I received another "surprise" e-mail from Francisco: "I spoke today with Mr. Rafael Silvela, General Manager of Golf at La Moraleja. He is receiving me at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 3. Anyway, I explained to him the situation and he seems to be cooperative. The switchboard lady was not very nice, but Mr. Silvela seems to be OK. He is very formal (normal when you are surrounded by so many important people, I guess).

"I rented a car for Thursday afternoon in Mondragon and will drive in the evening to Madrid. I will spend the night in a hotel in downtown Madrid, and in the morning I will drive to the golf course to meet Mr. Silvela. It is all arranged."

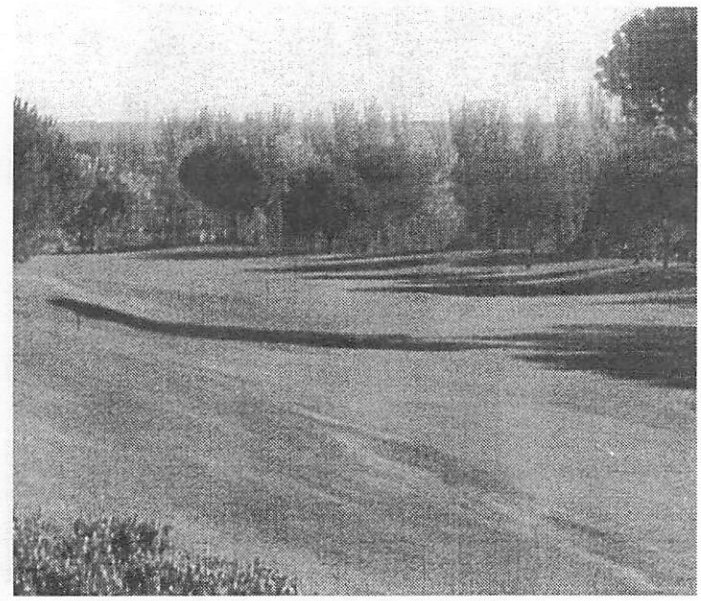
I simply could not believe what Francisco was willing to go through for me—and the Club! In the days leading up to Francisco's appointment with Mr. Silvela, I did some research on Bing's trip to Spain and events leading up to it. Bing had just completed a two-week engagement at the London Palladium on October 8, 1977. He gave one more concert on October 10 at the Conference Center in Brighton, England. On October 11, he recorded eight songs and an interview for BBC radio in the morning, along with a photo shoot that afternoon for the album jacket of his recently completed "Seasons" album.

Also on October 11, he dealt with the police, upon discovering his London flat had been broken into and robbed during his concert in Brighton. On October 12, he played 11 holes at the Cranbrook golf course in Kent (a course which he was interested in buying) before returning to his London flat for a late afternoon interview with a journalist.

Then, early on the morning of Thursday, October 13, he flew from London to Madrid for a four-day recreational weekend of golf and hunting.

La Moraleja golf course is located in the La Moreleja residential complex, 8.8 kilometers (5½ miles) from Spain's capital along the Madrid-Burgos national highway. Their full address is:

Golf La Moraleja S.A.
Paseo Marquesa Viuda de Aldama No. 50
28109 La Moraleja (Madrid) Spain.



18th hole tee-off point and road leading back up to the clubhouse

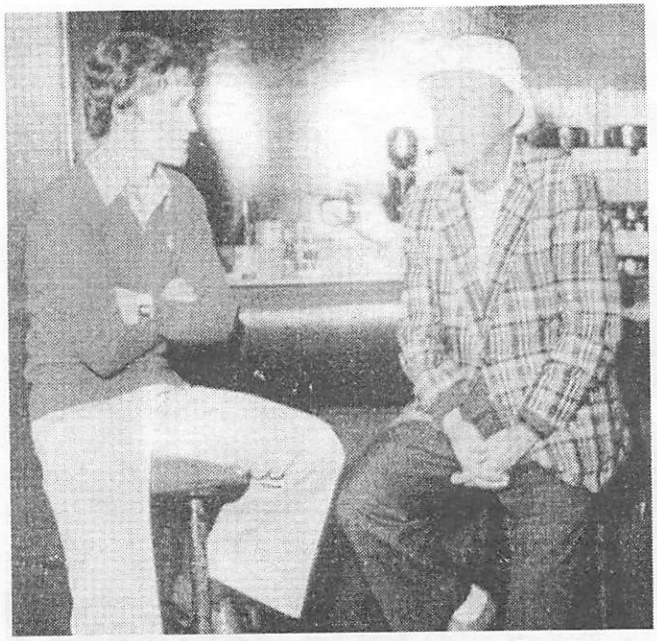
The club was founded in 1975 and originally comprised an 18-hole golf course, a smaller itinerary of nine par-3 holes, and a putting green and practice ground, all designed and supervised by the famous American golfer Jack Nicklaus.

In 1976, the facilities were joined by a clubhouse covering 8,500 square meters (almost 100,000 square feet) and containing a restaurant, cafeteria, game room, lounges, etc. Bing had never been to La Moraleja prior to the autumn of 1977, but no doubt it was at the urging of his good friend Jack Nicklaus that he decided to make the trip. I discovered that Bing knew a lot of people in the La Moraleja community and may have hunted with some of them in previous years. This too may have been among the factors that took him there.

Bing wasted no time upon arriving at La Moraleja on October 13 in getting out on the links. He was paired with the World (at the time) and Spanish Golf Champion Manuel Pinero. Their opponents were Cesar de Zulueta, President of La Moraleja, and Valentin Barrios. Pinero and Bing lost to de Zulueta and Barrios for that first match, with Bing carding a 92, but they were confident the 14th would be their "lucky day."

Getting back to Francisco's appointment with Rafael Silvela, Francisco phoned me from Newark, New Jersey on the evening of November 3, 2000, having just arrived from Spain, to tell me how it went. He told me he had shot 3 floppy discs full of photos with his digital camera, inside and outside, based on the points of interest I had suggested. He also said Mr. Silvela told him he was the Manager of La Moraleja in 1977 and lunched with Bing, Manuel Pinero and Cesar de Zulueta prior to the golf match on Friday, October 14. The photo below shows Bing preparing to eat his last meal at 2:00 p.m. that afternoon. He ordered only a cup of chicken broth, a ham-lettuce-tomato sandwich, and a glass of water.

Bing preparing to eat his last meal, La Moraleja dining room 10/14/77



Bing and his partner in golf match, Spanish Champion Manuel Pinero, 19th hole bar, La Moraleja 10/14/77

Mr. Silvela said that most of the conversation during that lunch centered around Saturday's planned partridge hunt. Bing was very particular about the type of rifle he wanted to use for the shoot. Several different types were shown to him, but Bing would only settle for a 20-gauge. It had to be this or nothing!

Bing took this partridge hunt seriously; he even bought a new $700 wardrobe for it, including a jacket, pants, hat, leather lace-up boots, thick handwoven socks and a full range of accessories. Sadly, he would never get a chance to wear them. Following the partridge hunt, Bing had planned on flying to the island of Majorca for more golf before returning to California. He was planning to meet with record producer Ken Barnes upon his return home to routine songs for a planned duet album with Bob Hope.

Following lunch, Bing spoke to journalists in the clubhouse in what turned out to be his final interview. He was in good spirits and reminisced freely about his long show business experience. He said the movie *High Society,* in which he starred with Frank Sinatra, Grace Kelly and Louis Armstrong was "the most satisfying one of my career." He described his trip to Spain as a test of his recovery from the back injury he had suffered March 3 (a ruptured disc caused by a 20-foot fall from a Pasadena, CA stage). He went on to say he was looking forward to teaming again with Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour in *The Road To The Fountain Of Youth.*

The biggest surprise (to me) of Francisco's visit came when he asked Mr. Silvela if he knew the whereabouts of three of the foursome: Zulueta, Pinero, and Barrios. Mr. Silvela replied that Cesar de Zulueta died

Valentin Barrios, 11/3/00

several years ago; Manuel Pinero is believed to still live in Madrid, but hadn't been to La Moraleja recently, although he plays the course from time to time; but that "Valentin Barrios is one of our club pros. I'll call him." Within moments Valentin Barrios, one of only two surviving members of that foursome which included Bing, was standing in Mr. Silvela's office!

At first, Mr. Barrios wasn't too willing to cooperate. "I'm a professional," he said. "I usually get paid for interviews and such."

Francisco—never bashful—said, "Yes, but I have no money!" He explained to Barrios about the fan club, that we're listed in the *Guinness Book Of World Records* as the oldest active fan club and began to show him the questions I'd prepared and material I'd sent along. Both Mr. Silvela and Mr. Barrios were impressed, and Francisco believes it is only because I made sure he was well prepared for the visit that they agreed to continue.

Both informed Francisco of a "Bing Crosby Fund" set up at La Moraleja to send young caddies to school and for a few other charities. Mr. Silvela invited J. Javier Tejada Enriquez, the Club Controller, to join in and explain the charity foundation to him. The President of the foundation is Efifanio Ridruejo Brieva. He is also the current President of La Moraleja Golf Course. Mr. Ridruejo is the second President of La Moraleja. The first was Cesar de Zulueta.

Francisco told them that perhaps our club could contribute at some point, and both Mr. Barrios and Mr. Silvella seemed pleased to hear this.

Valentin Barrios recalled Bing's final round of golf for Francisco: "He played very well, and I know he enjoyed it very much. He told us he was feeling much better after his fall in California a few months earlier—and better still for being out on this beautiful golf course. He told me about some of his golf games as we played, about games with great pros like Ben Hogan, Gene Sarazen, Sam Snead, Gene Littler, Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus. He told a lot of little stories about each of them.

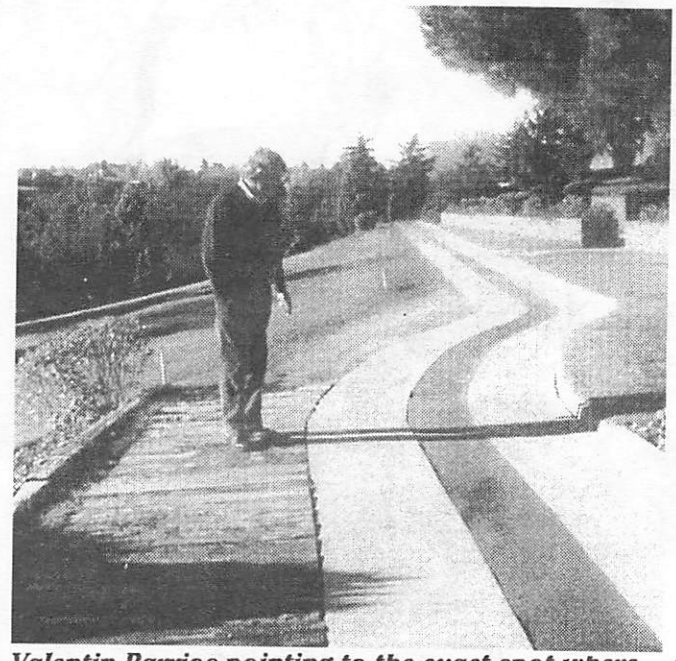
"Jack Nicklaus was his favorite, and I remember him telling me they planned a father-and-son match between them in a few weeks. Mr. Crosby said he was glad to have known all these great golfers. He was in good spirits; we joked about his white sun hat and old red cardigan. He was very relaxed, even at the second-to-last hole, when the score was even and he hit one into the sand trap. But he never lost his cool—still humming and whistling at the last hole.

"I remember he scored an 85; he and Manuel won by one stroke because of Bing's handicap, which was a 13, I believe. Bing collected his ten-dollar prize before we headed back to the clubhouse. I remember, too, that he had a new set of Ben Hogan golf clubs for the round, but still used an ancient Hogan putter, which must've been his favorite."

Mr. Barrios then offered a never-before told story, recalling the last song Bing ever sang: "There were some construction workers building a new house just off from the 9th hole. The workers recognized Bing and motioned for him to come over to them. Bing was very happy to be recognized and walked over to the men, who asked for a song. The last song Bing Crosby sang, which I remember vividly, was 'Strangers In The Night.'"

It is unclear whether Bing voluntarily chose to sing this song or if he asked the workers what they would like to hear and they chose it.

Valentin Barrios took Francisco to the exact spot where the foursome was when Bing fell. It was only



Valentin Barrios pointing to the exact spot where Bing fell dead. Clubhouse is just off to the right.

about 15 or 20 yards from the clubhouse entrance. Francisco noticed there was a steep hill leading from the 18th hill to the walkway and suggested that maybe climbing this hill caused Bing's heart attack. "No," replied Barrios. "He was driven up the hill in a golf cart and had only a short distance to walk on flat, level ground. I was walking right alongside of him and was the last person to speak to him. He was very happy about winning the match. At the time, the pathway was a red-colored gravel, but it's since been paved over so the golf carts can drive on it easier. It still follows the same path we took that day.

"It's been widely quoted that Bing's last words were 'That was a great game of golf, fellas' or something to that effect. Well, he did say that in the golf cart heading up the hill, but afterwards, while we were walking towards the clubhouse entrance —just seconds before his collapse—he spoke his real last words to me. He turned and said, 'Let's go have a Coca-Cola.'

"The next minute (around 6:30 p.m.), he fell face down on the red-brick path, landing on my foot when he fell. We turned him over; he was very pale and had a large red bruise on his forehead from where he hit the ground. He died at my feet. I knew he was dead right away — died instantly.

"We carried him into the clubhouse and summoned the house doctor (Dr. Laiseca). We called for an ambulance, just to make it look like he died en route to the hospital and not at the golf course. We all knew he was gone before the ambulance ever arrived..

"Dr. Laiseca showed me how to massage his heart while he prepared an adrenalin injection, which was was put directly into his heart. I massaged his heart for over half an hour, but nothing could be done. He was dead-on-arrival at the hospital.*

Bing meets with reporters, 10/14/77

"I couldn't believe it. I never would've imagined he would have a heart attack. He showed no signs of being tired or in pain or anything. All at once, he dropped dead. I'll never forget it."

Bing was administered the Last Rites at the hospital. Spain is predominantly a Catholic country, and Bing was a devout Catholic.

* * * *

By now, it was time for Francisco to get to the airport so he could catch his flight to New York. Mr. Silvela gave him a booklet about the golf course, and they bid one another farewell.

It goes without saying that I am forever in Francisco's debt for doing this. I simply cannot thank him enough for his kindness, not only to me, but for all people interested in Bing Crosby — fans, biographers and researchers alike. Also my thanks go to Rafael Silvela and Valentin Barrios for their cooperation and for being so open and candid for the benefit of Bing's fans.

And a *big* thank you to Malcolm Macfarlane, editor of the International Crosby Circle's *Bing* magazine, for supplying the rare photographs of Bing taken at La Moraleja on October 14, 1977 and for helping process the digital photos taken by Francisco.

It is important to note that Bing Crosby died the way we can all only hope to when our time comes—instantly and without pain or suffering. He died a happy, content man—a winner to the end!

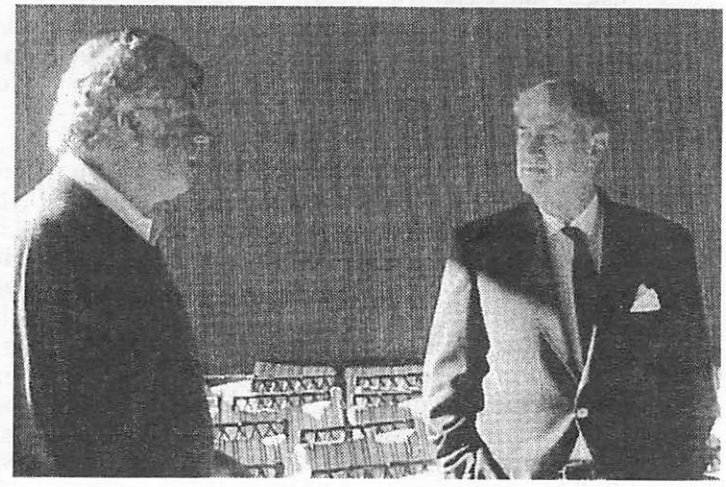
*Reports at the time say it was the Red Cross Hospital, but Mr. Silvela and Mr. Barrios believe he was taken to the Rena Victoria, as it is the closest to La Moraleja. — G.V.B.

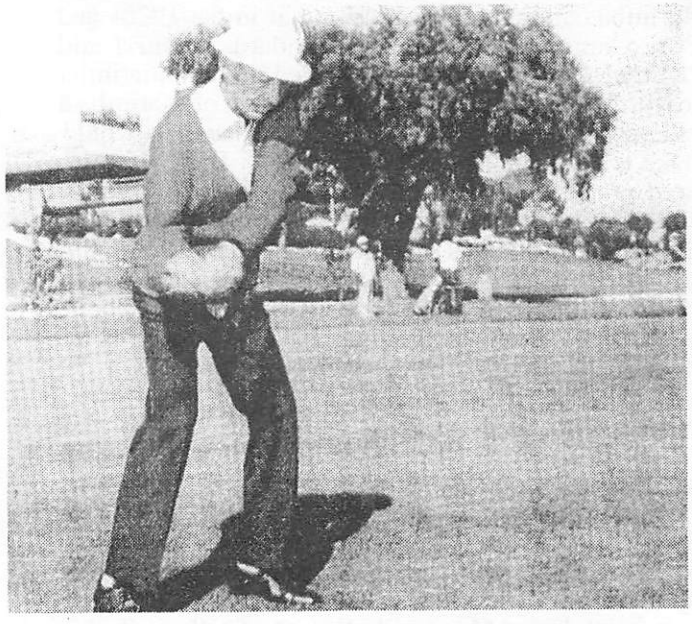
Manuel and Bing approach the 18th tee, La Moraleja, 10/14/77

Bing and Cesar de Zulueta at the 19th hole bar, La Moraleja golf club on 10/14/77

Logo of Club

Valentin Barrios (left) and Rafael Silvela, Golf Manager at La Moraleja, 11/3/00. Mr. Silvela lunched with Bing just prior to the last round of golf on 10/14/77.





Bing swings, La Moraleja, 10/14/77

18th hole at La Moraleja

¡EL COMPADRE BING CROSBY!: THE LATÍN REPERTOIRE, PT. 3

by Edwin García, Esq.

Contributions: Tim Morgereth, Lionel Pairpoint, Mark Scrimger, & Greg Van Beek: Photos/sheet music covers: Mark Scrimger & Edwin García

■ CANCION MEXICANA & RANCHERA

In Part I of this continuing series of articles, we surveyed the many personal ties Bing Crosby had with México. With this present article, we bear witness that Crosby was a great cultivator of authentic Mexican music; which is perhaps the most cosmopolitan of Latín American music genres. But first, let us briefly survey that country's musical foundations. We are informed by two sources: Gilbert Chase's *The Music of Spain* (W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1941); and Claes af Geijerstam's *Popular Music In Mexico* (University of New Mexico Press, 1976).

In his authoritative book, Gilbert Chase notes the introduction of Spanish music into the Americas. Almost a hundred years before the founding of the first permanent colony in New England, the Spaniards had established schools in México for the teaching of European music. Franciscan friar Pedro de Gante founded the first of these schools at Texcoco in 1524, only three years after the capture of Mexico City by Hernan Cortés. The primary purpose of the instruction was to train musicians for the service of the Catholic church. Naturally, religious music received the highest priority. And yet, secular music was by no means neglected. In 1526, a certain Ortiz had been among the companions of Cortés. He is described as "tocador de bihuela y que enseñaba a danzar" (a player of the guitar and a teacher of dancing). Soon thereafter, Ortiz established a dancing school in Mexico City.

In his overview thesis, Claes af Geijerstam picks up the topic. The intensive Spanish music invasion would overwhelm the native Indian musical cultures, primarily that of the Aztecs and Mayas. Gradually, the Indian music which survived merged with the Spanish folklore to form one of the foundations of the country's own *mestizo* culture. And while not as dominant as in other Latín American countries, African musical forms made their way into Mexican theatre genres. Possibly the most significant African contribution was the introduction in the 16th or 17th century of the prototype instrument of the latter day marimba, which would become very important in Mexican music. From this mixture, there emerged several song or dance forms such as *jaropos, jarabes, corridos, huapangos*, and *jaranas*.

Other European influences would be felt. During Emperor Maximilian's short reign (1864-67), a wave of French culture swept over México. Thus, Spain was replaced by France as an arbiter of taste, mainly among those members of México's urban population who followed European cultural trends. The now well known *mariachis* ensembles played at social functions such as weddings. Hence, the word comes from the French *mariage* (marriage). From late 18th century on, salon dances such as the *minuet, waltz, polka, mazurka*, and *schottische* were imported from Paris. Additionally, Italian opera was introduced into Mexico City in the 1820s. The *bel canto* style of singing became very popular and was incorporated into folk music traditions.

The most well known genre to emerge from México is the **jarabe tapatió**, a multi-sectioned dance comprised of a set of folk melodies. One of the melodies was actually a *fandango* known as the *Mexican Hat Dance*. With quick 6/8 and 3/4 meters, this particular tune became popular in 1919 though its history stretches back to the late 18th century. Many examples abound of the use of this dance by Hollywood, whenever a Mexican ambience was required for a musical or cartoon. Its melody was utilized in two Crosby versions of *It Happened In Monterey*: (a) on radio, as a counter-melody played by guitarist Vince Terry for '57-58 Ford Road Shows with the Buddy Cole trio; and (b) on record, as briefly quoted by the brass in a middle passage of the Bing-Rosemary Clooney duet for the '58 LP *Fancy Meeting You Here*.

Aside from certain guitar styles, the main contributions from México to American Pop have been in the wealth of songs, rather than any particular dance rhythms. However, four characteristic Mexican musical "sounds" have prevailed upon the ears of listeners, the (a) *harp mariachis sound*: comprising violins, harp, vihuela and jarana (the last two are guitar instruments); (b) *trumpet mariachi sound*: comprising the fanfare of trumpets, the scraping of violins, and the plucking of guitars; (c) Texas *Norteño band sound*: incorporating ocarina instruments and the German influenced polka accordion music; and (d) *marimba combo sound*. Marimba combos were very popular in the 1920s and '30s. Composer of Mexican standards *Frenesí* and *Perfidia*, Alberto Domínguez started out in a marimba group. Xavier Cugat would make the use of marimba a trademark of his unique style. Also, Guatemala would make it a national instrument. In 1932, Bing was featured on the Brunswick recording of Irving Berlin's **Face The Music** medley. The Victor Young orchestra plays the instrumental interlude *On A Roof In Manhattan*. Berlin's lyric on *Roof* was based on a Spanish theme. With this in mind, Larry Gomar's vibraphone solo on the Brunswick disc may have been inspired by the related marimba sound currently in vogue.

❖ Canción Mexicana

Early Mexican popular music shows the influence of European *salon* music, particularly the *waltz*. Violinist Juventino Rosas' **Sobre Las Olas** (under the German title *Über die Wellen*) was hugely popular during the late 19th century. It was so Viennese in style that no one believed it was Mexican; let alone composed by a Mexican-Indian. Originally written in

1888, it was revised with English lyrics as *The Loveliest Night Of The Year* for the Mario Lanza film *The Great Caruso* (MGM '51). The song became a million seller for Mario, despite the fact that he didn't sing it in the film; Ann Blyth did. But rather, he would sing it in a later flick *The Seven Hills Of Rome*. For a '51 Chesterfield show, Helen O'Connell regaled Bing's audience with a rousing waltz-swing rendition. Previously in 1941, strains of the melody were used as incidental music at the end of a movie theatre scene in Crosby's flick *Birth Of The Blues*. Later accompanied by a choral group, Bing sang it on his '62 singalong LP *Bing Crosby On The Happy Side*. As proof of its unending appeal, New Orleans Jazz clarinetist Pete Fountain recorded a dixieland version of the tune in 1972 for MCA.

Another tune popular in México since about 1865 is **La Golondrina**. Composed in 1862 by Narcisco Serradell, the song was written in 4/4 time as a generic *canción* with salon music characteristics. It emerged in the U.S. in 1883, English lyrics being added in 1908. The Victor Military Band had a Top 10 hit in 1914. The song became a favorite of operatic singers such as Beniamino Gigli, Alfredo Kraus and José Mojica, the famous Mexican tenor-monk. Using the imagery of the hesitancy of a swallow before migration, it is a song of farewell. In 1928, Paul Whiteman recorded the tune with Crosby possibly part of a vocal chorus. However, Bing's presence is in doubt. In a quick paced arrangement, it is mostly an instrumental record with added vocal effects. The song was included in *Happy Days* (Fox '30), a picture which would mark Betty Grable's film debut.

In 1923, several Mexican songs became U.S. hits including *Cielito Lindo* (Ay, Ay, Ay, Ay); and *Estrellita* (The Little Star). Set in fast waltz time, **Cielito Lindo** has been adapted many times with different texts. Although disputes exist regarding authorship, the consensus is that the most common version emerged in 1919 featuring a love text set to a tune by Mexican composer Quirino F. Mendoza; which he derived from a Cuban melody. The song has several connections with Bing's career: '33 instrumental by the Lennie Hayton orchestra on Crosby's radio show *Music That Satisfies*; '60 Bing solo in mambo rhythm for the *El Señor Bing* LP with the English lyric *Heavenly Night*; and a '64 duet with Rosemary Clooney set to a dixieland two-beat for his *That Travelin' Two-Beat* LP, with yet another English lyric *Adios Señorita*. The latter duet version featured an inventive countermelody composed by Jay Livingston.

One of México's most respected serious composers, Manuel M. Ponce wrote the enduringly popular **Estrellita** in 1909. Set in 4/4 time, he would even use strains from the melody for the middle movement of his Violin Concerto. The song is considered a pop classic in Latín America. In 1915, it was introduced in the U.S. by McKee's Orchestra (Victor); and later recorded by violinist Jascha Heifetz. Trumpeter Harry James revived the tune in 1944. Bing did not perform the song. However, we have two radio performances: on KMH '45, an operatic solo by soprano Vivian Delaquiesa; and on GE '52, a lush instrumental by the John Scott Trotter orchestra with Joe Venuti on featured violin.

With the passage of time, Mexican composers moved away from the European model and developed their own romantic *canción mexicana*. Embracing this musical style, Bing's former KMH music director Jimmy Dorsey made hit recordings with the next two songs: *María Elena* and *Bésame Mucho*. In 1932, Veracruz native Lorenzo Barcelata published his waltz ballad **María Elena**. It was written for and dedicated to the wife of Mexican President Portes Gil. In 1941, Dorsey revived the song in an English lyric version with Bob Eberly on vocals. For their effort, they would score a #1 hit Decca record. Coming on its heels was Wayne King's platter, which reached the #2 spot on the charts. Concurrently, Crosby warbled the song several times on KMH. In the same year, it was used in the Gene Autry cowboy caper *Down Mexico Way*.

Bésame Mucho was composed in 1941 by Consuelo Velázquez. She based the melody on the nightingale aria from Enrique Granados' opera *Goyescas*. Indeed, *Bésame* includes many triplets in its melodic line which is characteristic of Spanish music. With vocals by Kitty Kallen, Dorsey and his orchestra had another #1, million selling hit with the song in

Movie still from *Road To Morocco* (Paramount 1942).
L-R: Mexican-Irish American actor Anthony Quinn, Bing and Bob Hope

1944. In the same year on KMH, Dale Evans sang a biguine-swing version. Interestingly, when the Beatles were trying to get established with a record label, one of their first demo tapes featured their version of *Bésame Mucho*. As we shall review in a later section, Crosby would record the tune for his *Bingo Viejo* LP.

The arrangement backing Dale (biguine-swing) compares with the aforementioned performance of *The Loveliest Night Of The Year* by Helen O'Connell (waltz-swing). On both, John Trotter is utilizing a Jimmy Dorsey trademark. For many of his arrangements of Latín songs, Dorsey would open with a vocal chorus or two in one tempo, followed by an instrumental bridge, and ending in a different tempo. Sometimes, Spanish would be sung on one of the choruses; as Dale does on the first chorus of *Bésame*.

For two years, Guadalajara native Gabriel Ruíz studied medicine before giving it up to concentrate on music; making his debut as a concert pianist in 1934. From his musical pen, we have two '41 compositions: *Amor* and *Cuanto Le Gusta* (La Parranda). Years after the emergence of Cole Porter's *Begin The Beguine* in 1935, Mexican composers adapted the *biguine* to the Cuban *bolero*. This was the case with **Amor**. Accompanied by the Tommy Dorsey orchestra, Ginny Simms introduced the English version in *Broadway Rhythm* (MGM '43). It became #1 on the U.S. Hit Parade charts, via best-selling records by Andy Russell and Bing. Crosby's platter reached the highest position landing at #2.

With the singing of the repeated word *Amor*, the song requires concentration in sustaining notes at the end of phrases. Thus, Crosby's golden-toned vibrato is on display. Bing must have loved the song. It was featured at least 13 times on radio for KMH, Philco and several wartime broadcasts. In late August 1944, Crosby embarked on a European tour to entertain servicemen. While in England, he would sing the song for a couple of BBC programmes, accompanied by the Glenn Miller orchestra.

With Xavier Cugat and his Waldolf-Astoria orchestra, Carmen Miranda introduced the samba **Cuanto Le Gusta** in *A Date With Judy* (MGM '48). The Decca recording which followed was a big hit, teaming her with the Andrews Sisters. Bing aired the song five times on Philco and GE; mostly accompanied by the Rhythmaires including a duet with Peggy Lee. Additionally, it was used for a January '65 episode of Bing's ABC-T.V. weekly sitcom: with nice flute-guitar combo backing. In its English version, the title words lose some meaning. The original subtitle *La Parranda* referred to a group of party-goers; the lyric expressing "how much they like" to party.

Special review is made regarding the two most successful exponents of the *canción mexicana*, Agustín Lara and María Grever. Lara (1900-1970) was the most internationally known Mexican composer. Transmitting from México City on station XEW, he was able to promote his music via a '30 radio programme "La Hora Azul" (The Blue Hour). From a Bing perspective, we consider a quartet of tunes: *Concha Nácar*; *Granada*; *Solamente Una Vez*; and *María Bonita*.

Citing *Noche de Ronda* and *Novillero* as examples, several of his songs were published under his sister's name María Teresa Lara. This was done to avoid prosecution for having sold them to firms other than RCA Victor, with which he had an exclusive contract. Another of these suspected songs was the lovely ballad **Concha Nácar** (Lovely Day); sung by Shirley Jones in *Pepe* (Columbia '60). Crosby fans will remember his memorable cameo in the flick. Dory Langdon supplied the English lyrics. She was the wife of pianist-composer Andre Previn, who also supplied music for the film. Originally, Lara had written it as a foxtrot in 1933.

Interesting from a singer's craft, how Bing handled rangy concert-type songs (usually showpieces for classically trained tenors) such as *Ol' Man River*; *Because*; *Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life*; *Oh, Holy Night*; and Lara's *Granada*. To accommodate his bass-baritone range, Bing would perform these songs in a *rubato* style: easing back on volume and vocal intensity; concentrating on tone and sometimes employing quick tempos, e.g. *Ol' Man River* and the '51 commercial disc **Granada**. On the latter, he delivers a swift paced reading. The guitar-vocal group Bando da Lua provide Spanish choruses. And yet, compare the '54 GE radio version. Sans vocal group, Trotter's string laden arrangement is slower and has more of an Andalusian feel; replete with exotic reed intro. For GE '53-54, Bing would perform the song 7 times; with another instrumental by the Trotter orchestra. Lara composed the tune in 1932. On screen, it was sung by Colombian baritone Carlos Ramírez in *Two Girls And A Sailor* (MGM '44). Structurally, the song is a free-form *fantasia española* with melodic variations; an eight bar habanera interlude; and meter changes from 4/4, 3/4, to 2/4. In 1965, the Spanish government gave Lara a mansion in Granada, in appreciation of his beautiful songs about Spanish cities.

Composed in 1944, **Solamente Una Vez** became one of Lara's best known songs. A year later, Dora Luz introduced it in the Disney film *The Three Caballeros*. Accompanied by Cugat and his trademark marimba sound, Bing's English version *You Belong To My Heart* is credited with popularizing the song to non-Latín listeners. In Cuban bolero rhythm, Crosby's '45 disc would climb to the 3rd position and remain on the charts for 14 weeks. The platter benefited from heavy promotion on KMH. While there are many performances to choose from, three stand out: (a) the original commercial take became a collector's item, wherein Bing flubs the words; (b) as mentioned in the prior article Part II, a tango rendition for Mail Call #138; and (c) the '57 *Ford Road Show* radio version. Supported by Buddy Cole's sparkling piano, the latter is the only example where Crosby sings the song totally in Spanish!

The Spanish lyric relates that the singer has "only loved once in his lifetime." Lara was inspired to write the song on a tour to Buenos Aires, where he met up with José Mojica. The Mexican tenor had gained fame as: a singer with the Chicago opera; a romantic recording artiste for RCA Victor; and an actor for the Fox studios, making films in Spanish and English. In 1942, he decided to abandon his career and entered a Peruvian monastery. José was ordained a Franciscan monk in 1947. Before revealing his intentions to anyone, he confided this decision to Lara. Agustín was

very touched by this trust. As a tribute, he composed *Solamente Una Vez.*

Another personal dedication came in 1945. The waltz **María Bonita** was composed as a wedding present for Lara's wife, film beauty María Félix. It became a huge hit via tenor Pedro Vargas' 1946 recording. Vargas was a friend and popularizer of Lara's compositions. The song was so successful that the title became the name of a street in México City. Former radio singer Bobby Worth would add English lyrics. Bing would record it in '51 with the Bando da Lua, in 2/4 rumba rhythm; then return to the song in a bilingual version for his *Bingo Viejo* LP. On one of the Chesterfield shows, Crosby introduces the song by proclaiming that he is a big fan of "Agustín Lara, the great Mexican composer."

Born of a Spanish father and Mexican mother, María Grever (1884-1951) showed musical promise at an early age. Her father sent her to Paris to study with composer Claude DeBussy. While in Europe, she received valuable advice from operetta composer Franz Léhar. As her legend grew, she was given her own radio show on Mexican station XEW in 1949. José Mojica was a particular popularizer of her songs, such as **Júrame** (Promise, Love) which was presented as an instrumental tango by the Paul Whiteman orchestra on a 1929 Old Gold radio show.

From her inspiration, three songs got the Bing treatment on KMH: *Ti-Pi-Tín*; *Te Quiero, Dijiste*; and *Cuando Vuelva A Tu Lado.* In 1938, **Ti-Pi-Tín** became very popular and was promptly featured on KMH. No less than five hit recordings emerged: platters by the bands of Horace Heidt; George Hall; Jerry Blaine; and Guy Lombardo; with another disc by the Andrews Sisters. Grever based this waltz on Chabrier's *España* and Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole*. In its original Spanish, the phrase "ti-pi-tín" referred to the amorous fluttering of the singer's heart, as he wooed his maiden. Raymood Leveen's English lyric related the love tale of "Rosita and Manuelo."

Originally, Grever composed **Te Quiero, Dijiste** in 1929 as a 4/4 Spanish canción. Reincarnated as *Magic In The Moonlight*, it was sung on screen by Carlos Ramírez in the Esther Williams-Xavier Cugat vehicle *Bathing Beauty* (MGM '44). Crosby would air the song twice on KMH '45. The Trotter-arranged intro had strings plucking slowly and gingerly, proceeding from note to note like a cat burglar prowling in the night. On one of the radio shows, Bing mentioned that the song was introduced by Ramírez; with Andy Russell also enjoying some success as well.

Finally, Crosby performed **Cuando Vuelva A Tu Lado** (What A Difference A Day Made) with three different rhythmic arrangements: (a) on the *El Señor Bingo* LP, a chachachá rendition; (b) for a '66 Hollywood Palace TV special, a brief Johnny Mercer-Bing duet in swing tempo; and (c) a very fine 4/4 ballad version featured several times on KMH '44-45. On radio, Trotter's string-laden arrangement includes gentle harp figures. Beginning with a '34 Decca platter by Bing's brother Bob Crosby and the Dorsey brothers, the song was recorded many times over the years. In the many English versions, it has been so de-Latinized that few believe it is Latín in origin. Incredibly, Dinah Washington's Top 10 hit platter for Mercury garnered

her a 1959 Grammy Award for Best Rhythm & Blues Performance!

❖ **Ranchera**

While Irish influences in U.S. country music are well documented, Hispanic contributions are often overlooked. In 1519, Hernan Cortés invaded México. His party included 16 stallions and mares; thus, introducing the horse to North America. Hence, Mexicans were the first cowboys (vaqueros). Some recognition of this fact is contained on a 1930 Old Gold radio programme, wherein Crosby sang the 2/4 novelty ballad **Ride On, Vaquero**. It was written by Abel Baer and L. Wolfe Gilbert for one of the first sound westerns, *Romance Of The Rio Grande* (Fox '29). This example points to the fact that Bing was a very early cultivator of the cowboy genre and country music in general. In the lyric, a guitar's melody beckons the carefree vaquero to return to his hacienda. Incidentally, the beautiful Mexican actress Lupe Vélez appeared on the same broadcast. In addition to starring in the '40s *Mexican Spitfire* RKO series, she had a three year romance with Bing's pal Gary Cooper.

Several influences have been traced. Southwest music took both guitar techniques and songs from Mexican sources. The "Spanish two-step" has been suggested as the origin of Bob Wills' *San Antonio Rose.* In the '30s, *western-swing* originated in Texas. It has been described as a mix of Mexican mariachi from the south with jazz and country strains from the east. The ranchera *Allá En El Rancho Grande* was played by almost all western-swing bands becoming a standard. Author Bill C. Malone has suggested in his *Country Music U.S.A.* (University of Texas Press, 1991) that the "blue yodel" of singers like Jimmy Rodgers may have been influenced by Mexican song, "characterized by shouts and wails which were similar to the hillbilly yodel." Moreover, protest singer

Woody Guthrie's singing and guitar on a number of his Texan ballads were similar in style to the Mexican *corrido*. Also, country music had inherited the held-note post-*habanera* ballad beat via México.

The Mexican *ranchera* was the equivalent of country music and provided an influence in the cowboy song genre. Emerging from the post-1910 revolution period in México, it developed in theaters sung as interludes between acts of nationalist plays. Predominantly, these "ranch" songs about cowboy life were composed in polka (2/4) and waltz (3/4) rhythms. Dressed in florid cowboy garb (*charro*), the ranchera singers developed an extremely emotional style, exhibiting an inimitable sentimentality, even tearfulness. This passionate manner of singing would have made even Al Jolson blush. One characteristic is a held note at the end of a line, culminating in a "dying fall" that could drop a third or more, in glissando manner. In addition, falsetto cries are another popular device. Clearly, these performance techniques differ from country and western styles. And yet, the lyrics of both rancheras and C & W songs often similarly deal with loneliness, betrayed love, and sentimental partings.

Although it began life in the theatre, the ranchera was most fully identified with the '30s Mexican cinema in films by noted singers Jorge Negrete, Pedro Infante, Javier Solís, and Antonio Aguilar. During the early '40s, tenor Tito Guízar made several minor U.S. flicks. (Guízar and Bing appeared on a '44 *Mail Call* broadcast.) But, the Mexican film **Allá En El Rancho Grande** (Bustamente-Fuentes '36) would be Guízar's most important work. The film and its title song are credited with producing a new kind of singer *el charro cantor*, a singer of ranch songs. Its U.S. equivalent being cowboy singers such as Gene Autry and Roy Rodgers. The song was published in '34 with music by Emilio Uranga; Spanish lyrics by J. del Morales and singer Silvano Ramos. Bartley Costello added English lyrics, but retained some of the original Spanish lines. In 1935, it became a regional success for Texas-swing star Milton Brown. Yet, the song didn't take off until Guízar's film; Bing's '39 Top 10 hit; and the subsequent Gene Autry flick *Mexicali Rose* (Republic '39).

Under its English sub-title *My Ranch*, Bing is backed by a small contingent of Trotter's orchestra, the Frying Pan Five with vocal support by The Foursome. The song is in quick 2/4 tempo, in a variation of polka rhythm. Regarding the arrangement, there may be some who might think that the use of the ocarina was a bit hokey. And yet, it was appropriate. When the Spaniards came to México, they found that the indigenous Indians used a number of musical instruments, among them the ocarina. On radio, Crosby sang the song 7 times for KMH ('39-'41: including a '41 duet with Connie Boswell and Bob Burns) and Philco ('47: with Peggy Lee and Gary Cooper's emphatic yahoos!). Additionally, there were two alternate performances: a V-disc community singalong with organ backing; and the '54 Bing-Buddy Cole record for the LP box set, *Bing: A Musical Autobiography*.

Echoing the sentiments of living happily *Allá En El Rancho Grande*, the English lyric version of **Las Alteñitas** (A Gay Ranchero) relates the ranch life of the gay ranchero "Pancho with his Pepita at his side." Written in 1936 by Juan José Espinosa, his original Spanish lyric referred to the beautiful surroundings and a particular flower from Tepatitlan. For a '41 KMH programme, the song is sung in crisp 2/4 tempo by Connie Boswell. She is supported by fine jazz trumpeting, presumably by Andy Secrest.

Cinema idol baritone Jorge Negrete emerged as the leading charro singer; with starring roles in films such as **¡Ay! Jalisco, No Te Rajes** (Joselito Rodriguez '41). Composer Manuel Esperón's title song was later revived in *The Three Caballeros* (Disney '45). In the original Spanish, lyricist Ernesto Cortázar praises the scenery and people of his hometown Jalisco and its state capitol, Guadalajara. By contrast, the English lyric referred to the comradeship between three caballeros: the Disney animated characters Panchito, Joe Carioca, and Donald Duck. Accompanied by the Vic Schoen orchestra, it became a '45 hit record for Bing and the Andrews Sisters. The arrangement features guitars and brass section sounding somewhat like a mariachis group. The B-take resulted in a "blow-up" when Bing sang the wrong words. An oddity regarding the English lyric is a reference to singing a samba. Actually, this song is in quick 2/4 polka rhythm.

Three specific types of rancheras developed, the: (a) amorous nocturnal serenades (*serenatas*); (b) birthday greeting sung with a mariachi group, before the rise of new morning (*cantó mañanitas*); and (c) sentimental farewells, which preceded the journey from the rural areas to town for the start of the workday (*las despedidas*). On the latter, Crosby songs *Vaya Con Dios* and *La Borrachita* are prime examples.

With its farewell benediction, **Vaya Con Dios** (May God Be With You) is similar in theme with *La Borrachita*, which we'll discuss shortly in connection with the LP *Bingo Viejo*. In 1953, *Vaya* was written in Hollywood by Larry Russell and his wife Inez James.

Movie still from *Pepe* (Columbia 1960).
L-R: Bing and Mexican comedy legend Cantinflas duet on a snatch of *South Of The Border*

Russell was a former arranger for Victor Young and Dinah Shore. A full set of Spanish lyrics exists. It is surmised that James wrote the original Spanish words; with Buddy Pepper supplying the English. On disc and the 5 times aired on GE '53-54, Bing renders a gentle, full-toned vocal of this lovely waltz. Although introduced by Anita O'Day (Mercury), it became a #1, million seller for Les Paul and Mary Ford, whose multi-tracked guitar-voice duets pioneered the new techniques that soon transformed the recording industry.

Use of mariachis accompaniment for rancheras is evident in scenes from *Pepe*. The soundtrack included a number of rancheras: Bonifacio Collazo's **Las Coronelas**; Jeronimo Mendez' **Mi Tierra**; singer Francisco "Paco" Michel's *corrido* **Ay Chabela**; and the traditional *fandango* tune **Las Copetonas**. During an opening bullring scene, these melodies are played by a brass-heavy mariachis. The styles range from pasodoble, march, but mostly ranchera.

Finally, the instrumental **Tequila** was heard midway through the film in a dream sequence. In '58, it was recorded by studio musicians The Champs for Gene Autry's Challenge Records. The band's saxophonist Chuck Rio composed the tune. It became the biggest Latin-related rock hit, selling more than 6 million records worldwide and captured a '58 Grammy as Best R & B Performance. As with Dinah Washington's version of *What A Difference A Day Made*, the Grammy folks were fooled once again!

❖ **Bingo Viejo**

This album was recorded on separate sessions in June and September 1975, and released by English Decca. In 1977, the U.S. label Anahuac reissued the LP with three tracks re-mixed: *Eres Tú*; *Andalucía*; and *Spanish Eyes*. The re-mix corrected the abrupt vocal endings by fading them out. Arguably, the Anahuac issue was sonically finer; very slight reverb was added giving the album a more stereophonic sound and better integration between vocals and the band. *Bingo Viejo* has the dual meaning of the literal "old Bing"; and the affectionate "dear old Bing." At times, Crosby was indifferent regarding his recording projects. By contrast, this album represented a personal investment both financially and artistically. He produced it and came up with the idea. In concept, the work is unified by four characteristics, the: (a) bilingual manner of presenting the songs; (b) use of the *Cuban bolero* rhythm on most of the tracks; (c) "farewell forever" or "I'll return" themes contained in several songs—*Andalucía*; *Spanish Eyes*; *Amapola*; *La Borrachita*; and (d) authentic Mexican song or theme represented by six of the ten selections.

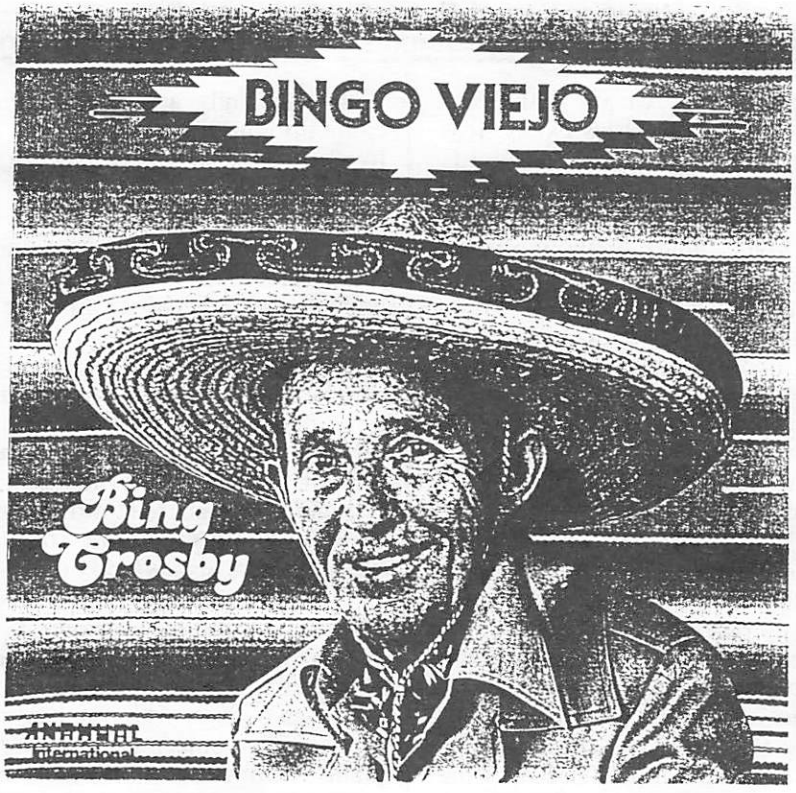
On all but one song (*La Borrachita*), Bing sang choruses in both English and Spanish. This bilingual approach was a trademark of Mexican-Spanish crooner Andy Russell. Early in his career, Russell sang with the Gus Arnheim orchestra; as did Crosby. It was Arnheim who started Andy singing part of each song in Spanish. As previously stated, Jimmy Dorsey's stable of singers also would employ this device.

The project was the second by Bing and Paul Thatcher Smith, the session's leader. Their prior effort occurred earlier in the year: the *A Southern Memoir* LP. On this follow-up, Smith has arranged most of the songs as boleros with touches of jazz flavoring: creating inventive bolero-jazz hybrids. San Diego born jazz pianist Smith began his career in the 1940s. Over the years, he worked with Johnny Richards; Tommy Dorsey; Ozzie Nelson; Ziggy Elman; Les Paul; Dizzy Gillespie; Buddy DeFranco; Ray Anthony; and Buddy Rich. Also, he frequently accompanied Ella Fitzgerald in person and on records. On the September 27, 1959 ABC-TV broadcast of *The Bing Crosby Show*, Smith backed Frank Sinatra.

Before reviewing the songs, we address an enigma. There exist some "mystery" choruses on three songs: English choruses on *Eres Tú* and *Cuando Calienta El Sol*; and Spanish choruses on *Andalucía*. Although this is pure conjecture, Bing may have supplied the English or Spanish words. This theory is advanced based on an extensive search by your author. Last issue in Part II, we stated that Crosby had written a letter to record producer Ken Barnes explaining that he had provided English words on some of the songs for the LP. As previously stated, the English lyric on *Eres Tú* does not appear to have been written by either Mike Hawker or Jay Livingston and Ray Evans.

On *Calienta*, the English words Bing sings differ from those published by Sunny Skylar. Considering his well recognized prodigious vocabulary, it is not difficult to imagine Crosby coming up with an obscure word like "zephyr" as appears on *Calienta*. Regarding *Andalucía*, your author has unearthed a set of Spanish lyrics written by the song's composer, Cuban Ernesto Lecuona. His words are different from those sung by Crosby. Bing did have sufficient command of Spanish; and the chorus he sings is fairly simple. Could it be?

Crosby referred to *Bingo Viejo* as his "Mexican" album. And yet, some of the tunes were not Mexican in origin: *Eres Tú; Cuando Calienta El Sol*; *Andalucía*; *Aquellos Ojos Verdes*; and *Spanish Eyes*. Background on the '73 composition **Eres Tú** was provided in Part II. Suffice to state, it was the only contemporary song; all the others were composed in prior decades. In 1961, **Cuando Calienta El Sol** (Love Me With All Your Heart) was written and sung by the Cuban trío Hermanos Rigual: Pedro, Mario, and Carlos, arriving in México in 1947 where they became very popular. Their song is considered the first *balada-rock* (a rock ballad with overtones of bolero rhythm). As with *Bésame Mucho*, *Calienta* has many triplets, characteristic of Spanish music. In 4/4 time, Bing's record is a *cha-cha-chá*-bolero. Of all the selections on the LP, *Calienta* is the most authentic Latín sounding track. It begins with a conga beat prominently displayed, supporting throughout. Paul Smith utilizes the classic Cuban *clave* device: playing a set of piano chords repeatedly; treating the piano as a percussion instrument. The first U.S. record was in 1963 by original *Tonight Show* host musician-comic Steve Allen; with Spanish choruses by the Copacabana Trio. In 1966, the Irish trio The Bachelors had a Top 40 hit. For '76-77 concerts in London and Mysen, Norway, Bing give live performances of this song.



Anahuac cover version of *Bingo Viejo*

As reviewed in Part II, Lecuona's **Andalucía** (The Breeze And I) was recorded thrice by Crosby in different rhythmic settings. This 3rd record in jazz-bolero rhythm contains a more florid piano styling by Smith. On the "mystery" Spanish chorus, Bing sings the grammatically incorrect "el rosa" rather than "la rosa." A further clue that he wrote the lyric?

Exotic Latín eyes inspired the next two songs. Cuban lyricist Adolfo Utreras' sister Conchita had beautiful green eyes. Hence, she was the inspiration for Nilo Menéndez' 1929 composition **Aquellos Ojos Verdes** (Green Eyes). Nilo had been Xavier Cugat's pianist. In 1941, it would become a #1, million selling swing hit for Jimmy Dorsey with vocals by Helen O'Connell and Bob Eberly; and featured in the biofilm *The Fabulous Dorseys* (Universal '46). Again, Smith has provided Bing with a jazz-bolero arrangement. The song is structured with verses in 6/8 time and choruses in 2/4.

Next, we have the bolero novelty **Spanish Eyes** (Ojos Españoles). A German composition, it was introduced by its composer Bert Kaempfert and his orchestra (Decca) under the title *Moon Over Naples*. In '66, singer Al Martino had a Top 20 hit. Despite the title, the English lyric refers to Mexican eyes, rather than Spanish ones. The use of marimba evokes a sunny tropic, beach setting; which supports the Spanish lyric comparison of the blue ocean and sky with the lovely Spanish eyes. Moreover, the mostly low note melody reinforces this lazy atmosphere. Interestingly, Bing used the traditional Castilian "th" in place of the "z" in the word "azul," rather than the common "z" pronunciation.

Here, Mexican items include: *Bésame Mucho*; *Amapola*; *María Bonita*; *Frenesí*; and *La Borrachita*. Bing may not have sung Sunny Skylar's lyrics on *Cuando Calienta El Sol*. He did so with **Bésame Mucho** (Kiss Me Again). As previously discussed, the Dale Evans' version was in biguine-swing rhythm. Backing Crosby's vocals, this latter effort is arranged as a *chachachá*-bolero with lush, piano work by Smith and the conga drum prominently featured.

Overall, Crosby's Spanish pronunciation is good; except the "Am" of **Amapola** (Pretty Little Poppy). There should be a syllable between the first *A* and *m*, with the accent on the *A*. In 1924, José M. La Calle wrote *Amapola* as a tango. The prevalent 2/4 Latín beat would enable Crosby to thrice commercially record it employing three different beats: (a) cha-cha-chá, '60 LP *El Señor Bing*; (b) tango-bolero, '65 LP *Bing Crosby's Treasury - The Songs I Love*; and (c) Latín-Jazz, for this *Bingo Viejo* LP. This 3rd record shifts from stately, fanfare verses to very quick, Latín-jazz choruses. Unlike his previous recordings, there is a bonus. Bing sings the two verses: featuring an Andalusian interplay between guitar and trumpet. In addition, there were three solo performances on KMH '41

by Connie Boswell. The radio versions are not readily at hand. Hence, it is assumed they were in the swing tempo, currently in vogue. Further still, there were two other unexpected appearances of this song. On a KMH show (4/30/42), Mary Martin sings acappella a snatch of *Amapola* during a "memory" spot recalling the songs of 1924. Finally, in 1968 following an African vacation, Crosby wrote lyrics for a privately produced eleven minute recording titled *African Safari (*Tanzania*)* with snatches of well known melodies. He ends it with a chorus set to the melody of *Amapola*. A copy of the track was included on the '87 *Broadway Intermission* LP (BR-136).

Bing's 1951 platter of **María Bonita** was converted into a 2/4 rumba. On this latter recording, the tune reverts to its original waltz form, in a rousing pace with jazz trimmings. The introductory brass imitates a mariachis playing the triple time *jarabe* rhythm.

In 1938, Alberto Domínguez wrote **Frenesí** as a 2/4 canción; with several key changes. Two years later, clarinetist-band leader Artie Shaw had a hit in a foxtrot version; vocals by Anita Boyer. His recording would be #1 for 13 weeks, and was one of the best selling platters of the Second World War years. During a vacation trip to the seaside resort of Acapulco, Shaw had heard the tune played by a mariachi group. With marimba in tow, Crosby's version is a jazz-bolero fusion, that includes a nicely conceived 15 bars in "jump jive" tempo on the final chorus; ending with Bing's bass notes on the words "para mi." Four radio samples in '41-42 include: on KMH, a duet with Connie Boswell; a parody by Cass Dailey; and a solo on a Gulf Screen Guild broadcast titled "Altar Bound." As previously stated, Domínguez started out in a marimba band. Thus, the instrument is used appropriately on this recording of his composition.

The real gem of *Bingo Viejo* is the *ranchera* **La Borrachita**. Written in 1918, this was Ignacio Fernández Esperón's first song originally a *canción*; and in subsequent versions arranged as a *danza*. Esperón's pseudonym was Tata Nacho (1894-1968). He composed a number of classical pieces, but is remembered best for his popular songs. English lyrics were added in '33 and '46: Carol Raven's *There Is No One Like You*; and Al Stewart's *I'll Never Love Again*, respectively. The latter version was sung popularly by Andy Russell. However, Crosby's three performances were only in Spanish: on Philco (1/22/47), a harmonized ballad duet with Lina Romay; on The Bing Crosby Show (4/8/55), a radio solo accompanied by Buddy Cole in bolero rhythm; and this latter effort.

All are very enjoyable. And yet, in the opinion of your author, this latter record is one of the finest in his entire canon because of its: (a) creative arrangement; (b) overall audio balance; (c) sensitive, nuanced reading; and (d) skillful interplay of instruments. Of course, the evaluation of a musical performance is a subjective one. With over 2000 platters, Bing fans have ample choices to base their preferences. Thus, the reader may rightly disagree. Nevertheless, this recording provides a framework with which to discuss his art. Before delving into the recording itself, we reflect upon *Bing the singer* versus *Bing the recording artist.*

Several factors hampered a number of his recordings. As an interpreter of song, Crosby is credited with projecting a laid-back, conversational approach to phrasing. In his participation in structuring the arrangement and vocal preparation, Bing was often too casual. The arrangements were left to his arrangers. This point is illustrated in Ken Barnes' *The Crosby Years* (St. Martin's Press, 1980). On a joint record project, Barnes notes the starkly contrasting approaches of the meticulous Fred Astaire and the carefree Crosby. When he would make a suggestion, the preference was for a simple accompaniment. In this regard, Bing did not go as far as Frank Sinatra. With his seamless *legato*, Sinatra was the master of the nuance. Frank placed great importance on the arrangement, raising it to an equal level with the vocals; thereby creating a richer sonic ambience and more dramatic reading.

Many times, Crosby's voice would not be sufficiently warmed up; with what sounded like congestion in his "head" voice. As a result, the quality of his performances was inconsistent. In his autobiography *Call Me Lucky* (Da Capo Press, 1993), Bing admitted as much: ". . .Playing some of the records I made in the 1930's, I notice that in many of them I was tired; my voice was bad and had a lot of frogs in it. The notes were generally in key, but sometimes I barely made them and they sounded strained. But I paid no attention to whether they were bad or good when I made them. And they sold."

Vocal placement is another problem. As a typical bass-baritone, Bing had a "fat" voice: occupying a wide aural space. On monaural recordings, this factor obscures the orchestra. The result is an imbalance between vocalist and band. As an example of this "fat" voice, listen to his recording of *The Oldest Established* (Rep 2185) with Sinatra and Dean Martin. Frank and Dean's voices sound "thin" next to Crosby's. When asked how he felt about recording in stereo, Bing said he preferred the old mono way in which his voice was very well forward. In stereo, he felt he was competing with the arrangement and the band.

Moreover, Crosby tended to "boom" or loudly sing certain opening and closing words; or "pop" consonants and vowels. As a by-product of his engaging style, this tendency was generally acceptable. However, it would affect the recording volume. Anyone with an equalizer or volume oscillator on their stereo system will understand this point. Through the use of mixing techniques such as *panning* and *reverb*, these volume problems can be resolved. In addition, such mixing can help mask certain imperfections in vocal phrasing. As stated previously, the Anahuac remixes corrected the abrupt vocal endings on certain tracks.

I believe, his recording of *La Borrachita* is one of those rare instances where there is a balance between arrangement, lyric, vocalist, and accompaniment. The ambience created by the florid guitar, and Bing's sensitive reading and inventive whistling makes this one of Crosby's most strikingly effective dramatic readings. Paul Smith's arrangement is a curious, yet successful hybrid of flamenco-chachachá-bolero. It begins dramatically with a small complement of instruments: guitar, electric piano and declamatory vocals. The opening, virtuosic flamenco-styled guitar plays a rapid fire cascade of notes, on top of the single chord, hymn-like electric piano. On the previous *A Southern Memoir* LP, guitarists Allan Reuss and Tony Rizzi

played on different tracks. Thus, either one may have played on this track. After the intro, the full orchestral ensemble joins in and shifts the tempo to a quick, cha-cha-chá-bolero beat. For the span of three minutes, the accompaniment alternates in this fashion.

Undoubtedly, the non-Spanish fluent listener loses out by not fully appreciating how well served the Spanish lyrics are by the vocals and the ambience created by the arrangement. In the lyric, the male bids farewell to his "dear, drunken lady," la Borrachita. She has declined his invitation to come with him. The inference is he wants her to be his lifetime love and companion. Rebuffed, he sadly goes off "hasta la capital, para servir el patron" (to town to work for his boss). The lyric is ungrammatical, gibberish-like; suggesting that it is *he* and not she who is drunk. As such, this would lend greater poignancy to the narrative. Bing's singing reflects this pathos. While still resonant and vibrant, his seventy-plus year old voice nevertheless reveals the patina of age. And yet, this state actually attaches a convincing nuance to this melancholic song.

To many, Crosby's occasional whistling may have seemed a cute gimmick. Certainly, it didn't hurt the sales of *White Christmas*. On this recording, it is most effective. In whistling, the voice becomes a woodwind instrument: producing an airy quality perfectly suited to the outdoors. In the 18th century, these were the preferred instruments used by composers such as Franz Joseph Haydn for the outdoor music genres *serenades*, *nocturnes*, and *partitas*. The woodwinds create an ambience of intimacy, even solitude. Similarly, Bing's whistling reinforces this image of solitude. You can actually picture this simple, peasant man waking up before dawn when it is dark and solitary outside. There is a soft howling of the wind as he kisses his love goodbye. Moreover, his jazz background is on display. In the best tradition of jazz improvisation, the midpoint interlude features a "call and response" between the guitar and his whistling. I have recordings of this song by two legendary Latín tenors: Mexican José Mojica and Cuban Panchito Riset. Crosby's version outshines theirs.

❖ Mexican Novelties

Apparently, México is the favorite inspiration for many of the Latín novelties. Whether it was the *jarabe*, *mazurka*, or *jota*, triple meter genres were very popular in México. Likewise, the *waltz* fitted neatly with conventional public taste. Hence, we begin with a bumper crop of waltzes: a trio of songs by Mabel Wayne *In A Little Town Across The Border*; *Chiquita*; *It Happened In Monterey*; and other novelties addressed to Mexican ladies *Marcheta*; *Mexicali Rose*; *Conchita, Marquita, Lolita, Pepita, Rosita, Juanita López*; and *Belle of Albuquerque*.

Between 1927-30, Paul Whiteman enjoyed recording success with several compositions by female composer Mabel Wayne; beginning with the '27 *In A Little Spanish Town*, followed by '28 *Ramona*. Very little background information is available on Wayne. Lyricists called upon her to compose melodies for Latín themed songs. Doubtless, hoping to capitalize on her success with *In A Little Spanish Town*, Sam Lewis and Joe Young would affix words to Mabel's 1934 **In A Little Town Across The Border**. This latter waltz was very similar to the previous song; with its theme of going into town and finding romance while mission bells ring. It doesn't appear that Bing recorded or featured this tune on his early radio shows. Nevertheless, his image was used on the sheet music cover.

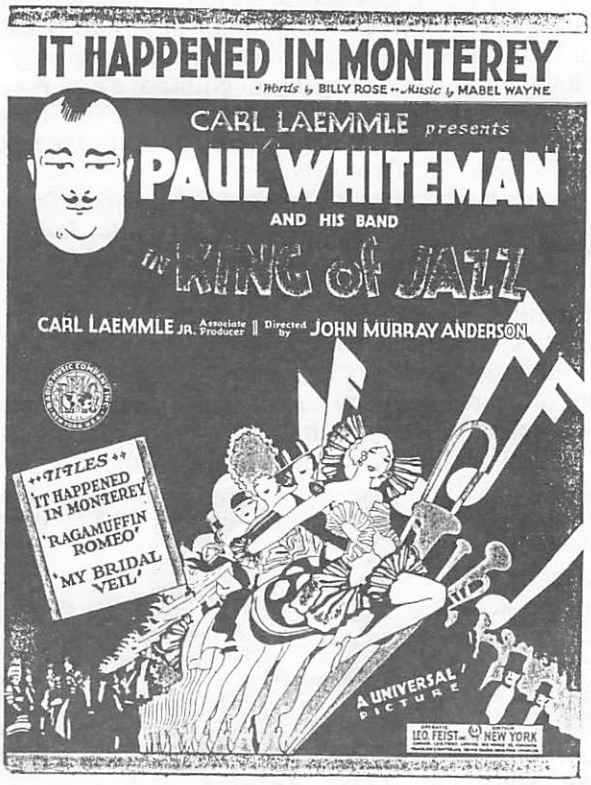
In between these "town" songs, Whiteman enjoyed a #4 hit for the Victor label with Wayne's 1928 composition **Chiquita**. The vocals were supplied by Jack Fulton. Subsequently, Whiteman inserted the tune in a medley for his '29 *Old Gold Cigarettes* radio programme. During this period, Crosby was in attendance at these broadcasts as part of the Rhythm Boys. With L. Wolfe Gilbert's lyrics, it is the objection of affection that has left the singer pleading "come back to me Chiquita, I miss you."

In the Whiteman bio-pic *King Of Jazz* (Universal '30), **It Happened In Monterey** was introduced as part of a medley by John Boles and Jeanette Loff. Boles sings the seldom heard introductory verse: a regretful, sad reminiscence of first having met and kissed along the Río Grande, leaving his love behind. Whiteman's Columbia platter rose as high as #2. Over many years and several mediums, Bing enjoyed a long association with the song, on: (a) radio—a solo for '30 *Old Gold Cigarettes*; a parody with Bob Hope for '51 *Chesterfield*; the waltz-swing version on '57-58 *Bing Crosby Show*; (b) record—as previously mentioned, the '58 Bing-Rosemary Clooney duet for the *Fancy Meeting You Here* LP; and (c) television—duets on a '59 *Oldsmobile* special with Jo Stafford; and for a '65 *Hollywood Palace* show with Caterina Valente. The Rosemary Clooney duet contains an irregular rhythmic pulse since the 3/4 waltz was converted into a 2/4 *chachachá*. By contrast, the '57-58 Buddy Cole radio versions start in waltz rhythm, then kick into swing.

An earlier song of reminiscence over a lost love was composed in 1913, **Marcheta** (A Love Song Of Old México). During '22-23, it became the first hit for composer-director Victor Schertzinger, via separate Top 10 discs by band leader Isham Jones and the female duo Olive Kline and Elsie Baker. Later, Victor directed Bing's first road picture *Road To Singapore*. Crosby aired the song for two '39-40 KMH shows. On the first show (11/30/39), he must have received a favorable response; deciding to record it in February 1940. With this and the next song, Trotter's gentle arrangement calls for a stately, slow tempo supported by a very sedate string and brass accompaniment.

In 1923, the lovely border song **Mexicali Rose** was composed by orchestra leader Jack B. Tenney. Unlike the lament of *Marcheta*, Helen Stone's words reassures that the singer will return "some sunny day." Strangely enough, it was first popularized in 1926 by a New York studio band who billed themselves as the Clicquot Club Eskimos. They were led by banjo player Harry Reser. Bing's 1938 platter revived the song, reaching #3 on the charts and selling in excess of a million copies. Previously, it was included in Crosby's film *Rhythm On The Range* (Paramount '36). Later, it got a further boost in the Gene Autry flick *Mexicali Rose* (Republic '39). For the '54 multi-LP set *Bing - A Musical Autobiography*, Crosby would re-record it accompanied by Buddy Cole. This second recording featured Cole's gentle organ playing and the tinkling of music box chimes. On radio, the song was aired some

Mexican Novelties



ten times for KMH, Philco and GE, including duets with Alec Templeton and Morton Downey. Additionally, it popped up on two television specials: '57 *Edsel* and '61 *Oldsmobile*. For his '38 KMH shows, Bing is supported with oohs, ahhs and humming by the Paul Taylor Choristers; giving the tune a hymn-like quality. The slow tempo allows Crosby to embrace every note of Tenney's beautiful melody. As an example of Crosby's unconventional style of phrasing, he sings the last word "goodbye," as three syllables.

The theme of cross-cultural liaisons is reflected in the next two songs: *Conchita, Marquita, Lolita, Pepita, Rosita, Juanita López*; and *Belle of Albuquerque*. On screen, Johnnie Johnston introduced **Conchita, Marquita, Lolita, Pepita, Rosita, Juanita López** in the flick *Priorities On Parade* (Paramount '42). Herb Magidson's lyrics poke fun at the Hispanic custom of adopting several names. An Irish lad named O'Toole falls in love with the "Rose of Juarez," who marries him and adds his last name to those of her own. This good humored tale is not far fetched. At the time, there was a Mexican actress-dancer who went by the single name Margo. She was the niece of Xavier Cugat's wife, Carmen Castillo. Thus, she began her career with Cugat's organization. In Hollywood, she appeared in a few films; later marrying actor Eddie Albert. Margo was part of the cast on an all Spanish, Xmas *Command Performance* (CP) radio show, with Crosby included. Her full maiden name was "María Marguerita Guadalupe Teresa Estella Castillo Boldao y O'Donnell!" Concurrently with the film, Bing recorded this Jule Styne tune in a rollicking arrangement by Vic Schoen. On radio, it was aired twice: a '42 KMH solo backed by the Music Maids; and a '43 CP snatch by Dinah Shore for a medley sung with Bing. Trotter's arrangement on KMH includes foot stomping imitative of the hand-clapping used for the *jarabe tapatió* dance.

Movie still from *Road To Morocco* (Paramount '42). L-R: Bob Hope, Dona Drake, Dorothy Lamour & Bing

On a '47 Philco show, Crosby joked he was nailed on a train by two "Indians" from Albuquerque with their tune **The Belle Of Albuquerque**. In waltz-swing tempo, Sid Silvers and Fred F. Finklehoffe's silly tale involved a Brooklyn Dodgers' pitcher named Lefty who meets María, the belle of Albuquerque. After consulting a Spanish dictionary, he learns to say "Yo amo usted." His pitching suffers, but his love life improves. If only it were that simple.

We get a change of pace from the waltz with four songs in 2/4: the rumba-swing *In Acapulco*; and three ballads *When The Swallows Come Back To Capistrano*; *Rio Rita*; and *South Of The Border*. From the musical *Diamond Horseshoe* (Fox '45), Betty Grable sang Harry Warren and Mack Gordon's **In Acapulco** in one sequence; in another, "the poet of the piano" Carmen Cavallaro played a rumba-boogie woogie version accompanied by the beating of bongós. Concurrently, Bing had Carmen play the tune on KMH, no doubt to aid Cavallaro's Decca recording.

Whether on wax or radio, Bing sang several songs with allusions to México, and her former territories California, New Mexico and Texas, among them: *Avalon Town, Avalon, On The Alamo, The Streets of Laredo, Legend of Old California*. They are not Latín, and fall outside the parameters of our consideration. However, we will take up **When the Swallows Come Back To Capistrano**. Franciscan friars had accompanied the Conquistadores, with a mission to indoctrinate the native Indians. From 1769-82, Junípero Serra founded 21 Spanish missions in California. Now extant, in 1776 Mission San Juan Capistrano was established in Orange county, south California; and completed in 1806. The Capistrano swallows are said to return every March 19. Leon René's '40 song used this image of routine to reflect the constancy of the singer's love. It was a '40 hit for The Ink Spots; Glenn Miller with vocal by Ray Eberle; and Xavier Cugat with Dinah Shore. On GE '53, she would sing her version. On two '40 KMH shows, Trotter's arrangement for Bing featured staccato flutes and pizzicato strings playing arpeggios to musically suggest the swallows' flight. Coincidentally at one time, Crosby's horse Dreamboat finished 3rd in the San Juan Capistrano handicap.

On an Old Gold show, the Whiteman orchestra played Harry Tierney and Joseph McCarthy's '26 **Rio Rita**. The song was written for a same titled musical at New York's Ziegfeld theatre. Twice, Hollywood remade it in '29 and '43 by RKO and MGM, respectively. In the lyric, the singer finds Rita by the Río Grande and falls in love. John Boles sang it in the '29 film. As previously stated, the next year Boles would sing about the love he left behind in Monterey. Lovely Dona Drake was a triple threat: actress, dancer, and singer. She appeared with Bing in three '42 Paramount films: *Hollywood Victory Caravan*; *Star Spangled Rhythm*; and *Road To Morocco*. She was born Rita Novella in Mexico City. Dona began her show business career as a band vocalist under the name of Rita Rio!

Although these novelties are meant only as light-hearted entertainment, they usually reflect non-authentic attempts at a Latín rhythmic arrangement and silly, trite lyrics (e.g., references to "New Joisey" in *Conchita*; and "Brooklyn" in *Belle*). In this and previous sections, we note the recurrences of two cliché images or themes in several of the songs: (a) mission bells ringing—*Vaya Con Dios*; *In A Little Town Across The Border; Conchita, Marquita, Lolita, Pepita, Rosita, Juanita López*; *When The Swallows Come Back To Capistrano*; *South Of The Border*; and (b) going or riding into México and finding romance—*Frenesí*; *In A Little Town Across The Border*, *Rio Rita; South Of The Border.*

Understandably, many of the novelties are not received enthusiastically by Hispanics. The lyrical **South of the Border** (Down México Way) is one notable exception. Approximately on a November 1965 BBC radio tribute to songwriter Jimmy Kennedy, Bing stated "I'd like to have a bob for every time I sang *South Of The Border*." Indeed, he enjoyed a long history with the song, on: (a) radio—various '39-40 shows for KMH; appearances with the two "Bobs," Hope and his younger brother Crosby; and an installment of the CBS Gulf Screen Guild programme, titled "Mr. Jinx Goes To Sea"; (b) record—duet snatch for the '60 soundtrack *Pepe*; lush, string-laden pasodoble version for the '65 LP *Bing Crosby's Treasury - The Songs I Love*; and medley snatch for the '76 LP *Bing Crosby Live At The London Palladium*; (c) film—*Pepe*; and (d) television—'57 Edsel; '65 Bing Crosby sitcom show; and '77 Fiftieth Anniversary and Norway broadcasts. On an episode of Crosby's ABC-TV sitcom (1/25/65), the song is delivered breezily with a bright, flute obbligato and a few bars of tango rhythm.

Published in 1939 as a "serenade," the tune was written by Kennedy and fellow Brit Michael Carr for an English tour by Gene Autry. Subsequently, Autry sang it in the film *South of the Border* (Republic '39); his recording climbed to #12 on the charts. Other successful records emerged by the orchestras of Benny Goodman, Horace Heidt, and Tommy Dorsey with vocals by Frank Sinatra. None was more successful than the group with the humorous monicker Shep Fields and His Rippling Rhythm Orchestra. With Hal Derwin on vocals, they scored a #1 hit with their version.

Cultural origins aside, Kennedy and Carr have demonstrated a sensitive touch by keeping the lyrics simple; so as not to detract from their tuneful melody. The melody contains several triplets, which we have repeatedly mentioned is a characteristic of Spanish music. The phrase "down México way" is skillfully matched with a descending note sequence. Even the oft-used "ay ay ays" avoid being a cliché: compare, in *Belle of Albuquerque*, they sound silly, trite; whereas, in *South*, the melismatic *ays* more naturally attach themselves to the flowing, melodic lines.

❖ Mexican Miscellaneous

In the miscellaneous category, we have comedy sketches, Christmas items and a ballet piece. Bill Morrow was the principal writer on Bing's *Philco Radio Time* show. México served as inspiration for two, three-minute comedy sketches, the: (a) **Mexican Restaurant Sketch** (11/6/46) with Skitch Henderson

and Lina Romay; and (b) **Mexican Golf Caddies Sketch** (12/15/48), with Bob Hope. In *Restaurant*, Bing and Skitch pull up at a Mexican bistro after having driven for six hours. Their tired spirits are revived upon meeting luscious waitress Lina. The comedy revolves around the hot, spicy food on the menu and the amorous tension between the participants. Actress-singer Lina was the Brooklyn born daughter of a Mexican diplomat. During the 1946-47 Philco season, she appeared on seven of Crosby's radio shows as the regular "girl" singer. Earlier, her principal success was as a featured singer with the Xavier Cugat orchestra. She appeared with them in some of the MGM musicals which were responsible in part for the spread of Latín music, such as *You Were Never Lovelier* ('42); *Two Girls And A Sailor* ('44); and *Bathing Beauty* ('44). In time, she came to be billed as "Cugie's Latín Doll."

In the *Mexican Caddies* sketch, Bing and Bob re-enact a conversation between two Mexican golf caddies "Bingelito and Roberto Hopie." The skit is just an excuse for them to engage in their usual trading of insults, albeit with Mexican accents. The main humor to emerge from this piece is the lingering effect of a flub on a previously scratched-out line in the script. Their ad-libbing skills are put to the test on this one.

One week after the *Caddies* sketch, the Mexican motif was continued with the re-appearance of the narration **The Small One** (A Christmas Play). In Part I of our articles, we briefly mentioned this 12 minute Christmas radio play. The story was written by Charles Tazewell in 1938; and first heard on the Kate Smith programme with Ethel Barrymore as narrator. Thereafter for eight consecutive years, Kate presented the tale on her radio show. Others would give it a go, including Spencer Tracy for a special 1944 Christmas Command Performance broadcast. Eventually, Crosby would present it on Philco for Christmas Day, 1946. For the next two years, he would continue to rebroad-

cast the segment for his Christmas season radio shows. The response was immediately favorable. Thus in '47, a recorded version was released on Decca Album No. DA-553. The story was produced and directed by Robert Welch; with music score composed and directed by Victor Young. At risk of giving too much away, the story centered around the lessons learned by a Mexican boy Pablo and his donkey, the Small One. The path taken by this tale is the road to Bethlehem and the first Christmas.

In similar vein, Bing sang in Spanish the children's song **La Piñata** for an episode (12/21/64) of the ABC-TV sitcom *The Bing Crosby Show*. In México, the main Christmas celebration is *Las Posadas*. Nightly from December 15 until Christmas Eve, friends join in procession carrying lighted candles to re-enact the Bible story of Mary and Joseph's search for lodging prior to Jesus' birth. They knock on neighbors' homes which represent a Bethlehem inn or *posada*. After being turned away several times, they are finally let in for a party consisting of food, songs and prayers.

At the party, children play the piñata game. The *piñata* is an earthen jar disguised with tissue paper and tinsel or a cardboard, papier-mâché figurine; and hung above their heads. Using long sticks, the kids are blindfolded and given three swings at the piñata until it breaks. One piñata is filled with water, another with confetti. The best one is filled with toys and candy. Of course, if the water piñata is struck everyone gets splashed. Each child takes a turn until the good piñata is broken. Then everyone dives for the shower of toys and sweets.

Accompanying the game, the kids are urged on with the traditional song *La Piñata*. In 2/4 rhythm, the short, eight measure melody is sung repeatedly. The main Spanish words Bing sings are: "Dale, dale, dale, no pierdas el tino; mide la distancia que hay en el camino." The translation is: "Hit it, hit it, hit it, don't lose your good aim. Measure out the distance, from here to there." The idea of a vessel containing gifts originated in China and probably was brought to Italy by Marco Polo. Later, it was adopted by the Spaniards.

In Bing's film *Just For You* (Paramount '52), Jane Wyman strums a guitar while slowly singing the tale of **The Maiden Of Guadalupe**. Written by Harry Warren and Leo Robin, the song was featured in a five minute classically-arranged Mexican ballet scene; adorned with carnival and bullfighting costumes. The music has touches of tango and pasodoble rhythms; danced to by principals Florence Lessing, Miriam Pandor, and Hispanic, Broadway choreographer Daniel Nagrin.

(To be continued in the next issue. . .NEXT UP: Rumba, Bolero, and Calypso.)

✍ POSTSCRIPT

1) Many thanks to Lionel Pairpoint for providing supplemental data on a couple of the radio songs reviewed in this article and for joining our team of contributors.

2) In article Part 2, we noted that tango singer Carlos Gardel appeared in the Bing related film *The Big Broadcast of 1936*. Upon his death in June '35, Paramount deleted his scenes. The Spanish film version was released with the title *Cazadores De Estrellas* (Hunters Of The Stars). Cecilia Villa, Manuel Peluffo and Carlos Spaventa were in the scenes with Gardel.

3) Our industrious radio archivist and contributor, Tim Morgereth, has put us wise unto another arena which further demonstrates Bing's ties with Latín American audiences. Tim has available a 60 min. cassette **VRA RR KMH 100: Los Music Hall - El Bingo**. It contains two assembled radio shows broadcast on Sunday nights (7/30/44 and 9/10/44) and transmitted over a joint Panamerican and NBC networks hookup from Radio City studios in New York. Jorge Belais(?) is the Spanish host who identifies the songs, as sung by Bing or his guests such as Marilyn Maxwell and the Charioteers. These are the regular English language performances taken from previous KMH shows, sans comedy sketches or dialogue excepting the Spanish language linking commentary by the announcer.

At the start, Belais instructs that the broadcast can be heard on several radio frequencies: bands 25, 31, 41, or 49 "metros." Thus, it can be surmised that these shows were intended to be heard by Latín American audiences over shortwave radio. We don't know how many of these shows were aired. Hence, club members with knowledge of these shows are encouraged to come forward with details.

In introducing Bing's performance of *Amor*, Belais reminds his audience that they know Crosby is a genuine admirer and cultivator of Latín music; and usually finds a spot on his shows for one of their own songs.

To obtain a copy of this cassette, Contact Tim Morgereth 5 Beach Drive, Baltimore, MD 21222-4925. Cost: $4.50 p.p. U.S.A.; $6.00 p.p. Foreign.

4) Correction: In Part I, we erroneously stated that *The Small One* was aired on KMH. As just discussed, it was featured on Philco.

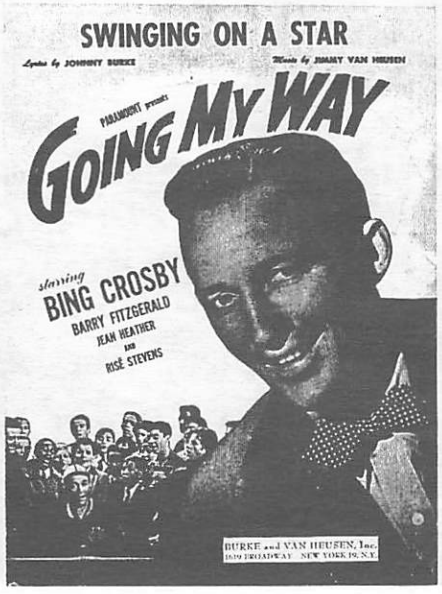
AND THE WINNER IS . . .

BING AND THE ACADEMY AWARDS

BY MARK SCRIMGER

Between 1934 and 1960, three of Bing's acting performances and fourteen songs he introduced in his movies were nominated for Academy Awards. Both the public and the critics made him the odds-on favorite to win the Oscar for his delightful portrayal of Father Chuck O'Malley in the 1944 film, *Going My Way.* To no one's surprise, except maybe his own, he took home the prize at the ceremony held in March, 1945. In fact, *Going My Way* won a total of seven Oscars that year, sweeping almost every major record category including Best Picture.

The 1944 Oscar winning tune, *Swinging On A Star,* from *Going My Way,* was actually Bing's third win in this category. *Sweet Leilani,* hand chosen and introduced by Bing in *Waikiki Wedding* in 1937, was the first. Five years later, in 1942, *White Christmas* from *Holiday Inn* brought an Oscar to composer Irving Berlin and gave Bing the song he would be identified with for the rest of his life. Bing's fourth winner, *In The Cool, Cool, Cool Of The Evening,* from 1950's *Here Comes The Groom,* made him the all-time record holder for introducing Academy Award winning songs.

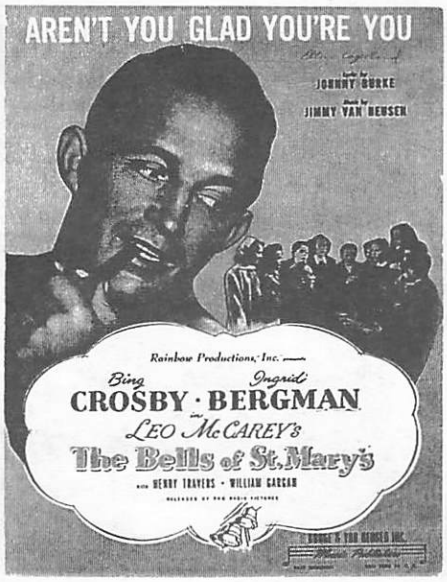


Though not the eventual winner, Bing was twice more nominated for Best Actor awards. First, for his repeat performance in 1945 as Father Chuck O'Malley in *The Bells Of St. Mary's* and lastly for his dramatic portrayal in 1954 of Frank Elgin in *The Country Girl*.

The category of Best Song was introduced by the Academy in 1934 and Bing was right in the thick of the competition with *Love In Bloom* from the film *She Loves Me Not*, which unfortunately did not win the top prize. With great regularity over the next 25 years, Many great songs introduced by Bing were nominated for (but did not win) Academy Awards. Although losers at the award ceremonies, they're still all winners in our book. The remaining nominees were *Pennies From Heaven* (1936), *Only Forever* (1940), *Ac-cent-tchu-ate The Positive* and *Aren't You Glad You're You* (both from 1945), *You Keep Coming Back Like A Song* (1946), *Zing A Little Zong* (1952), *Count Your Blessings* (1954), *True Love* (1956), and *The Second Time Around* (1960).

For your listening pleasure, all of the great tunes (minus *True Love* which was recorded for Capitol Records) are gathered together in the recent Wig Wiggins/MCA CD entitled *Bing Crosby-Academy Award Winners And Nominees-1934-1960*. And for all you trivia buffs, the song *That Old Black Magic* from the film *Star Spangled Rhythm* (which featured Bing along with many other Paramount stars) was nominated for an Academy Award in 1943. Although Bing wasn't the one who introduced it in the film nor did he make a recording of it at the time, his picture does appear on the sheet music cover. He did perform it two years later in his film *Here Comes The Waves*.

HERE COME THE WAVES
A Paramount Picture starring
BING CROSBY
BETTY HUTTON
and SONNY TUFTS
SCORE


AREN'T YOU GLAD YOU'RE YOU
JOHNNY BURKE
JIMMY VAN HEUSEN
Rainbow Productions, Inc.
Bing CROSBY · Ingrid BERGMAN
LEO McCAREY'S
The Bells of St. Mary's
HENRY TRAVERS · WILLIAM GARGAN

YOU KEEP COMING BACK LIKE A SONG
Words and Music by IRVING BERLIN
IRVING BERLIN'S
BLUE SKIES
A PARAMOUNT PICTURE
Starring
BING CROSBY
FRED ASTAIRE
JOAN CAULFIELD

ZING A LITTLE ZONG
WORDS BY Leo Robin
MUSIC BY Harry Warren
SPECIAL PICTURE RELEASE
SCORE:
From the Paramount Picture
"JUST FOR YOU"
Bing Crosby · Jane Wyman
Ethel Barrymore
BURVAN MUSIC CORPORATION
FAMOUS MUSIC CORPORATION
1619 BROADWAY, NEW YORK 19, N.Y.

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS INSTEAD OF SHEEP
Paramount Presents
IRVING BERLIN'S
White Christmas
in
VISTAVISION
Color by TECHNICOLOR
BING CROSBY · DANNY KAYE
ROSEMARY CLOONEY · VERA-ELLEN
Produced by Robert Emmett Dolan · Directed by Michael Curtiz
IRVING BERLIN
Music Corporation

TRUE LOVE
Music and Lyrics by COLE PORTER
VISTAVISION
Bing CROSBY · Grace KELLY · Frank SINATRA
"HIGH SOCIETY"
CELESTE HOLM · JOHN LUND · LOUIS CALHERN · SIDNEY BLACKMER
and LOUIS ARMSTRONG
COLE PORTER

THE SECOND TIME AROUND
Words by SAMMY CAHN
Music by JAMES VAN HEUSEN
BING CROSBY
FABIAN
TUESDAY WELD
NICOLE MAUREY
HIGH TIME
CHARLES BRACKETT · BLAKE EDWARDS · TOM WALDMAN · FRANK WALDMAN · GARSON KANIN
MILLER MUSIC CORPORATION

Bing Crosby and His Forgotten Leading Ladies

The Marjorie Reynolds Story

By David Lobosco

THE movie *Holiday Inn* is best-remembered for Bing Crosby crooning "White Christmas" by a Christmas tree or Fred Astaire doing an amazing tap dance with firecrackers. A forgotten element of Irving Berlin's 1942 cinematic gem was the lovely leading lady, Marjorie Reynolds.

She could not sing and could only marginally dance, but a sweet and innocent personality came through in every role she did, not just *Holiday Inn.* Even though her most famous film is nearing 60 years old, she definitely added a lot to the movie. For that reason, Marjorie Reynolds does not deserve to be another forgotten starlet of the war years.

She was born Marjorie Goodspeed on August 12, 1921 in Buhl, Idaho. Many people do not realize that little Marjorie started out as a child actress in silent films. Her father, a doctor, moved his wife and three daughters to Los Angeles in the early 1920s. Marjorie's mother was a typical stage mother, who enrolled her youngest daughter in drama school.

In 1923 Miss Reynolds made her movie debut in *Revelation,* and other child parts continued throughout the early thirties. Marjorie wanted to drop out of school and pursue acting full time, but her father (never much for the Hollywood glamour) forced the young girl to put acting on hold and finish her education at Los Angeles High School.

She returned to films as a chorus dancer in 1936's *Dancing Pirate,* but the roles were few and far between. On the set of *The Big Broadcast Of 1937* she met choreographer Danny Dare. He took Marjorie under his wing and taught her some of the important lessons in film making. Also at this time she met and fell in love with Jack Reynolds, who was in casting at the Goldwyn Studios at the time. They were married in 1938 when Marjorie was only 17.

More insignificant roles followed, but she did manage to score a few surprising roles. Billed as Marjorie Moore now, she was cast as a house guest in *Gone With The Wind* (1939). If you blink you will miss her in the movie, but she was beginning to have screen time with some of the major stars of Hollywood. Small roles continued for Marjorie in forgettable films like *Streets Of New York* (1939), *Sky Patrol* (1940) and *Dude Cowboy* (1941). It was also around this time that Marjorie was divorced.

In 1941 she was reacquainted with dance director Danny Dare. He urged her to dye her hair blonde and to go by her married name. As a result, Marjorie Reynolds was born! Dare also got her a screen test at Paramount Studios, where she was put under contract in 1942. As luck would have it, her first film for the studio would be the classic *Holiday Inn.*

Even though Miss Reynolds was happy to be working with Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire, she soon realized that life would not be happy on the set. Originally, Mary Martin was cast to play opposite Crosby and Astaire, but pregnancy forced her to withdraw. Over 300 girls were interviewed or tested, including Rita Hayworth and Betty Hutton.

MARJORIE REYNOLDS

According to Marjorie's daughter, Linda Hinsman, it was director Mark Sandrich and choreographer Danny Dare who eventually signed her for the movie. Marjorie's daughter adds that "Crosby and Astaire never wanted Mom in the role. Crosby wanted Mary Martin, and Astaire wanted Rita Hayworth." Nevertheless, Marjorie Reynolds was superb in the role of Linda Mason. Even though Reynolds states that there were tensions on the set, she would comment that Bing Crosby was a "man's man." Later in her life, she refused to talk about Bing and would not even grant Crosby biographer Gary Giddins an interview.

Regardless of what Reynolds thought of Bing Crosby, *Holiday Inn* was an overwhelming success. The movie cemented Marjorie as a leading actress at Paramount. Her next movie was merely a cameo in *Star-Spangled Rhythm* (1942). Originally she was slated to play opposite Eddie Bracken in the female lead, but the role went to Betty Hutton. Reynolds performed the number "On The Swing Shift" with Betty Rhodes and Dona Drake.

She was reteamed with Bing for 1943's *Dixie.* Again she plays Bing's love interest, Jean Mason. Even though she was third billed after Bing and Dorothy Lamour, it was Reynolds that got Crosby in the end.

According to Marjorie's daughter, it was hard for actresses to get good roles unless they participated on the "casting couch." Her daughter said, "Mom told me how hard life was at Paramount. When stars like Betty Hutton would do anything for a role, it was hard for actresses like Dorothy Lamour, Veronica Lake and herself to get good parts."

Above: Marjorie and Bing
Left: Marjorie in 1987

GONE WITH THE WIND gave Marjorie one of her smallest roles, but she was happy to be part of the big event. Here she's shown with Evelyn Keyes, Alicia Rhett and Olivia De Havilland in one of the film's early scenes. Few knew Marjorie was in the movie.

After she starred in *Ministry Of Fear* (1944) with Ray Milland and *Duffy's Tavern* (1945) with Ed Gardner, Paramount did not know what to do with her. In 1946 she was supposed to reteam with Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire in *Blue Skies,* but when she became pregnant by her second husband, she had to drop out. Joan Caulfield was cast in the role.

On November 17, 1946 Marjorie gave birth to her only child, Linda Vee. Her daughter was named after her famous role in *Holiday Inn.* Today Linda is a casting director and very successful in her own right.

Unfortunately, after making *Monsieur Beaucaire* (1946) with Bob Hope, Miss Reynolds was dropped by Paramount Studios. Even though married for the second time with a daughter, Marjorie was still quite beautiful and still a bankable item in Hollywood.

Her first post-Paramount role was in Universal's *Time Of Their Lives* (1946). In the movie she plays opposite Bud Abbott and Lou Costello. Marjorie and Lou play ghosts from the Revolutionary War who come back to haunt the present day. The movie is not well-remembered, but I personally think it is her best role outside of *Holiday Inn.* It is a very funny Abbott and Costello comedy.

Her next notable film was for MGM, where she played the second lead in *That Midnight Kiss* (1949) opposite Mario Lanza and Kathryn Grayson. By the 1950s, though, television was changing movies, and roles for women were even more scarce. Her last starring role was in *His Kind Of Woman* (1951) with Robert Mitchum.

When the Hollywood roles dried up, Marjorie simply moved on to television. After starring in some dramatic productions, she replaced Rosemary DeCamp on the comedy series *The Life Of Riley.* Playing Mrs. Riley opposite William Bendix, she finally could dig her heels into a substantial role. The show was highly successful and ran from 1953 to 1958. After the series was over, Marjorie again had trouble finding work. Daughter Linda had this to say:

"It was hard for Mom to get work after the Riley series was over. She was too familiar to the public as "Peg Riley." It was great then, but it was hard to find work afterwards. A lot of Mom's friends from the Paramount days had trouble — like Dorothy Lamour and Veronica Lake. It hit Veronica very hard, because she had never saved money. The last time Mom saw her, Veronica was working as a waitress in a diner. That is a far cry from the glamour days of Hollywood."

Married for the third and final time, Marjorie made some very good business decisions and occasionally returned to television and movie roles that she liked. Her last movie was the forgettable *Silent Witness* (1962). Miss Reynolds continued on television, doing a lot of commercials in the 1970s and 1980s. Her daughter by then was a casting director and cast her mother in the miniseries *Pearl* in 1978. Her daughter said that "Mom made me do a sort of screen test on her. She wanted to work for her role and was really wonderful."

Other than an appearance on television's *Murder She Wrote* in 1989, Marjorie retired to life in California with her grandchildren. Her last public appearance was at Dorothy Lamour's funeral in October of 1996. However, by then her own health was not that good. Marjorie Reynolds died on February 1, 1997 of heart failure. She will be best-remembered for her role in *Holiday Inn,* and every Christmas is a little brighter when one watches her role in that classic. For this and other roles, Marjorie Reynolds should be remembered fondly and not be one of Bing Crosby's forgotten leading ladies.

Bing-ing Around

By Pete Cakanic

ON May 31, A&E ran a very nice biography of Rosemary Clooney. Bing is mentioned, but not as much as his association with Rosie warranted. There is no mention that she appeared on at least 200 radio shows with Bing and that they had cut several best-selling albums together. *White Christmas,* the movie, was mentioned, but there was no sound bite of Bing. When talking briefly of her mental breakdown, little is attributed to Bing concerning her recovery:"It was Merv [Griffin, the billionaire] and Bing who helped me."

Rosemary did not write or produce the show. I'm not faulting her. You can barely hear her say "Bing." She probably said more, but it appears to have been cut out. However we all remember Rosie's tribute to Bing: "When I came out of a mental institution, no one would hire me. Then Bing called and asked, 'How'd you like to do a gig with me?' I thought it would be the one show, celebrating his 25th year in show business. A very important show, and we did many programs after that. I got my career back."

No mention is made of their personal friendship, which is well-documented in Kathryn Crosby's 1967 book, *Bing And Other Things.* Is this diminishment of Bing why we in Crosby fan clubs are wondering about "conspiracy"?

* * * *

May the late and great Perry Como rest in peace. Front-page obituaries in many newspapers pointed out that "Bing Crosby was Perry's idol," including *USA Today* with daily circulation of over two million.

* * * *

Some good exposure for Bing and a nice plug for Gary Giddins' book *Pocketful of Dreams* was in *Parade* magazine, the Sunday newspaper supplement that is said to reach 80 million readers. On page two of Walter Scott's "Personality Parade" a questioner asked for the correct date of Bing's birth. Giddins gave the correct date as May 3, 1903 and discussed the inaccuracy of the long-held date of May 2, 1904.

Several weeks later in *Parade* a reader asked whether Bob Hope and Bing were born on the same day and when Bing died. The answer to Hope's birthday was that he was born May 29, 1903 and that Bing died on October 14, 1977.

* * * *

While channel surfing one evening I saw an old Clark Gable, Myrna Loy and Jean Harlow movie. The listing in the TV guide said it was *Secretary Versus Wife.* Would you believe Clark Gable did a brief imitation of Bing? In his Gablese voice he sort of sang a line or two then said "buh-ba-boo" and whistled (weakly).

* * * *

In a book called *Get Happy; A Biography Of Judy Garland,* out last year. the author says, "A few years earlier Bing Crosby gave Judy Garland work when no one else would." He also gets in the usual Crosby dig, saying that Bing lived on Mapleton Drive (he did) and that the four boys used to hot-rod their Corvettes up and down the street. Does anyone out there know if there's an iota of truth to all four boys owning Corvettes at the same time? Maybe, but I doubt it.

In the *USA* issue of December 21, 2000, a little box said the top ten Christmas songs chosen by 54,000 AOL users picked Bing's "White Christmas" as number one. He also came up number eight with David Bowie on "Little Drummer Boy/Peace On Earth." Nat Cole was number five with "Christmas Song;" Elvis was number six with "Blue Christmas."

And in a BBC poll, Frank Sinatra came in number one as "singer of the century." Bing was number five. It was said that 44,000 votes were cast. Let's see. There are about 6 billion people on earth. Divide 6 billion into 44,000 and something like .0000000000073 of the people on earth have selected "the best." Less than that, actually, since Sinatra didn't get all the votes.

* * * *

Anyone ever watch "Hardball"? Chris Matthews, the host, has the nickname of "motor mouth." Recently discussing two politicians who pretended to like one another but really didn't, he likened it to Bing Crosby and Bob Hope. "They didn't really like one another, just pretended to." This guy's brain must at operate at 33 1/3 while his mouth goes at 78 rpm.

* * * *

A syndicated radio program that comes out of Valencia, CA under the auspices of Adult Standards, Westwood One Radio Network, goes out to 240 stations nationwide. Except for "True Love," Bing's records are never played. And when "True Love" is played the announcer usually fusses over "Princess Grace."

I reached the program director, Chick Watkins, by telephone. He was gracious and said that he liked Bing and that he was 66 years old himself. "But the station owners are after me to reach a younger audience." Yet he plays Johnny Ray (who has been dead longer than Methuselah), and as far as attracting younger listeners, the most consistent advertisers on the Joy Of Life radio show out of Aiken, SC that broadcasts in my area are two funeral homes and an assisted-living community for senior citizens!

* * * *

"Sweet Georgia Brown" has celebrated its 75th anniversary since the last issue of *Bingang.* An issue of *USA Today* noted it was the warm-up song for the Harlem Globetrotters and "a hit for the likes of Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald, Benny Goodman and Ethel Waters."

According to *Pop Memories, 1890-1954,* Bing's jazzy version of "Sweet Georgia Brown" peaked at number two for three weeks and charted for a total of eight weeks in mid-1932. Waters' version reached number six in 1925 and charted only two weeks.

The Library of Congress said "Sweet Georgia Brown" stands as the 13th most recorded music standard. And there's Bing, ahead of the pack as usual.

* * * *

And finally, may Olive Kathryn Grandstaff Crosby (our honorary president) have a nice rest. She concluded the final Bing Crosby Golf Tournament June 3 in Advance N.C., not far from Winston-Salem. George O'Reilly of Dublin, Ireland, who produced the fine CD *A Little Bit of Irish* and was instrumental in getting *Voice Of The Century* on English TV, was at the event. He told *Bingang* that locals named the road running up to Bermuda Country Club "Bing Crosby Boulevard." Grateful citizens honored the hostess (Kathryn), who brought the event there 16 years ago, by naming a bridge outside the Club, "The Kathryn Crosby."

Pete Cakanic
11 Teal Court
North Augusta SC 29841. (Phone: 803-278-0645)

Bing, Elvis & Goldmine

By Pete Cakanic

There was a time when Bing Crosby was as ubiquitous as Microsoft is now. He was everywhere, 24 hours a day — on jukeboxes, radio, movies, records, movie magazines, gossip columns (always favorable!), sports pages (because of the Pittsburgh pirates, his race horses and golf matches), and in the voices of men showering, trying to sing and whistle like Bing.

And then for the past ten to twenty years — nothing! As though some giant eraser in the cosmos deemed Bing, the colossus of musical entertainment in the first half of the 20th century, to be irrelevant.

Therefore, when a dedicated fan manages to get Bing's name in print, his chest swells and he makes it a point to share, and by example hope other Bingers will send letters to publications when the occasion arises. They are read and sometimes printed. *Goldmine* is proof of this.

It is a serious collectors publication. Rock and roll and modern pop are the brunt of its editorial coverage, not out of disdain for the era of Bing, but because that's where the profit in advertising lies. I remind you that one of the best articles about Bing in years was a *Goldmine* cover story with a very flattering portrait of Der Bingle, "Dreaming of a White Christmas." Published December 24, 1993, it was written by William J. Ruhlmann, an honorary member of Club Crosby, and it was reprinted in the pages of *Bingang*.

If you've never seen *Goldmine*, take a look. Advertisers cater to collectors. You'll find ads for boxes to hold 78s, 45s, LPs and CDs, phono turntables (even 78 rpm), cleaning and restoration gadgets — lots of things to enhance your record collecting.

When I spotted the January 12 issue with the cover of Elvis as "Artist of the Century" I bought it and wrote a letter to the editor. It was printed with comment from Greg Loescher, an obviously open-minded editor. I wrote to thank him. It, too, was printed. Here is an excerpt from his comments on my first letter:

Pete, you bring up some great points about Crosby. . . .We've traditionally devoted the first issue of each year as our Elvis issue. If not the Artist Of The Century, he is certainly one of the most collectible ones and of high interest to our readers. As for who is really Artist Of The Century, that's a very subjective selection. There are certainly criteria that can be used, some of which you bring up for Crosby: chart success, influence on music and society, movies, etc. It's hard to argue with most of the main top-runners — Sinatra, Presley, Crosby, the Beatles, Louis Armstrong. No matter who gets selected (and who really has the final say — Dick Clark? The Supreme Court?), there will always be detractors.

BCCC 2003

Saturday, May 3, 2003, is the centennial of Bing's birthday. Once in our lifetime, we have the good fortune to celebrate such a milestone in the history of American music and entertainment.

What could be more important to members of Club Crosby, the oldest fan club with a "fanzine" devoted to a solo performer (Guinness Book of World Records 2001), than to celebrate Bing and his work on that day, and during the rest of 2003? And what an opportunity to do our part in keeping Bing's memory alive for new generations!

The officers of Club Crosby have delegated to me the coordination of plans for BING CROSBY CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION 2003. A project like this calls for the participation of all members; and I want to make sure that no effort is duplicated, no opportunity overlooked.

Consider this your invitation to join me and other Bingfans in preparing for a glorious birthday celebration, followed by eight months of promoting Bing as only devotees can do.

While I do have some ideas of my own, I am counting on your opinions, abilities, and intentions to make the most of Bing's centennial. Let me be the clearinghouse and choreographer for our joint efforts.

With this issue of *BINGANG* you receive a sheet, addressed to me, that will start the ball rolling. I thought of donating the return postage, but there are plenty of other expenses to claim my personal resources, in the course of the BCCC 2003 project.

The sooner you respond, the better. Make no mistake about it: we have no time to waste. Some preparations take years, literally, to work out. Just ask our British friends of the International Crosby Circle who were busy, as of February 2001, securing facilities for their 2003 visit to Spokane.

DBP

The Dingbustingest Contest You Ever Clapped An Eye On

From the book *Seabiscuit—An American Legend*

By Laura Hillenbrand

A BOOK REVIEW

Random House, © 2001

ABOUT three issues back, *Bingang* featured an article about Bing's horse racing activities in partnership with Lin Howard. Lin's father, Charles Howard, was the owner of the famous racehorse, Seabiscuit. It seems that there was an ongoing rivalry between father and son to prove who was the better horseman. This chapter from the book tells of a famous match race that was arranged between Seabiscuit and Ligaroti (from Bing and Lin's stable) to settle the matter once and for all. An interesting secondary rivalry pitted Seabiscuit's trainer, Tom Smith, against *his* son, Jerry, who was hired as Ligaroti's trainer at the Binglin stables. No one could have predicted the eventual outcome or the controversy and ill will that would accompany it. I think you'll find the following account of the race, and Bing's part in it, fascinating reading.

M. S.

In one of the wildest and most controversial horse races ever run, Seabiscuit (A) and Ligaroti barrel down the Del Mar homestretch as Spec Richardson, on Ligaroti, repeatedly fouls George Woolf, on Seabiscuit.

LIN HOWARD was in one of those moods during which crazy ideas sound perfectly sensible. A bullish, handsome man with decisive eyebrows and more hair than he could find use for, Lin had a great deal of money and a habit of having things go his way. So many things in his life had gone his way that it no longer occurred to him not to be in a festive mood, and he spent much of his time celebrating the general goodness of things and sitting with old friends telling fat happy lies. But things had not gone Lin's way lately, and he was not accustomed to the feeling.

Lin wanted in the worst way to whip his father at racing, to knock his Seabiscuit down a peg or two, and he believed he had the horse to do it in Ligaroti. He was sure enough about it to have made some account-closing bets on the horse, at least one as a side wager with his father, and he was a great deal poorer for it. The last race really ate at him. Ligaroti had been at Seabiscuit's throat in the Hollywood Gold Cup when another horse had bumped him right out of his game. He had streaked down the stretch to finish fourth and had come back a week later to score a smashing victory over Whichcee in a Hollywood stakes race, firmly establishing himself as the second-best horse in the West. Bing Crosby and Lin were certain that with a weight break and a clean trip, Ligaroti had Seabiscuit's measure. Charles Howard didn't see it that way. Since the race, he had been going around with pockets full of clippings about Seabiscuit. Anytime anyone came near him, he would wave the articles around and start gushing, like a new father. The senior Howard probably didn't hold back when Lin was around. He was immensely proud of Lin's success with Ligaroti, but he enjoyed tweaking his son, and he was good at it. He had once given Lin a book for Christmas entitled *What You Know About Horses.* The pages were blank.

One night shortly after the Hollywood Gold Cup, Lin

was sitting at a restaurant table across from his father and Bing Crosby. They were apparently talking about the Gold Cup, and Lin was sitting there looking at his father and doing a slow burn. Bing wasn't too happy either; his misadventures as a horse owner were becoming an embarrassment. An idea was kicking around in Lin's head, and it seemed as good a time as any to toss it there. Why not have a match race between Seabiscuit and Ligaroti?

Charles snorted.

Crosby lit up. The year before, he had invested $600,000 in the building of a new track, Del Mar, a magnificent seaside racing palace near San Diego. Del Mar was a Bing paradise, featuring good racing by day and dinner, dancing, and crooning by night. But in its second year Del Mar needed a boost; daily attendance averaged just six thousand. A match race featuring Seabiscuit was just what the track needed. Crosby knew he could talk the board of directors into footing a big purse for the event. Crosby and Lin worked on Howard for the rest of the meal.

Howard began to see the merits of the race. For one, a sizable purse could get Seabiscuit that much closer to Sun Beau's money-winning mark; he was still $85,000 short. In addition, Smith might enjoy pitting his horse against one trained by his son, Jimmy, just as Howard would enjoy facing off against Lin. And Lin wouldn't let up on the needling. Howard gave in.

Lin wanted to make it interesting. He dared his father to make a side bet with him. Howard shook him off. He told him he couldn't bear to take any more money from his own son.

Crosby hustled off to make the arrangements. He returned with a fair deal. Del Mar would put up a winner-take-all purse of $25,000, 14 percent of the entire purse budget for the track's meeting. Seabiscuit would carry 130 pounds, Ligaroti 115. The race, slated for August 12, would be run over a mile and an eighth. Woolf would ride Seabiscuit, Spec Richardson would ride Ligaroti. Charles and Lin flipped a coin to determine post position. Charles won the toss and picked the rail.

At Del Mar the reporters followed Smith everywhere, but all they got out of him was a gusty "Ugh!" Unable to catch Seabiscuit working, the newsmen took a page from the Wise We Boys and staked out tactical positions around the track. Smith somehow evaded them. Someone wondered aloud if Seabiscuit was working "camouflaged as a diesel tractor." In the afternoon, racegoers streamed past Seabiscuit's stall. "It looked like a parade," Smith growled. When the races were on, Seabiscuit could see the fields go down the backstretch and would try to climb out of his stall to run with them. Smith had had enough and secreted the horse away to a new stall. The press couldn't find it.

In the week before the race, Howard took an unusual phone call. The caller was a track official, who told him that a New York bettor had sent $5,000 to wager on Ligaroti, challenging Howard to put up $15,000 against it. Howard was surely amazed at such a huge wager from a complete stranger, but he was not one to back down from a challenge. It took him awhile to learn that he had been suckered. The mysterious "New York bettor" was in fact Lin, who had talked the track official into placing the call.

Meanwhile, Lin and Crosby were hard at work putting on a horse race Hollywood-style. Crosby arranged to have a large section of the clubhouse roped off and patrolled by guards, with admission restricted to Ligaroti rooters — the "I'm for Ligaroti" section. He went out on a promotional tour to gather a cast of thousands, contacting four hundred friends, mostly movie people, and talking them into coming to the track to cheer his horse on. He appointed Dave Butler, director of Shirley Temple films, head cheerleader, fitting him with a turtleneck emblazoned with the initials BL, for Binglin. He had four hundred Ligaroti pennants printed up in the horse's colors, cerise and white polka dots, and attached to canes for waving. Turf scribe Jack McDonald surveyed the production and wondered if the net effect would be to inspire Ligaroti or scare him to death.

Crosby flooded the region with publicity. All over town, posters went up that read:

DEL MAR
AUGUST 12, 1938
SEABISCUIT VS. LIGAROTI

CHARLES HOWARD
VS. BING CROSBY
FATHER VS. SON
THE ICEMAN WOOLF
VS. SPEC RICHARDSON
AMERICA VS. ARGENTINA

ONE OF THE
GREATEST MATCH RACES
OF ALL TIME

From the race's conception, the press viewed it with skepticism. Sportswriters argued that the rich event was a farce arranged to pad Seabiscuit's bankroll. Del Mar, conscious of the potential conflict of interest for the Howards and Smiths, barred public wagering on

Bing with Ligaroti, 1938

the race. But the press's distrust and the absence of gambling did nothing to cool the enthusiasm of racing fans. On the sweltering race day, special trains and buses poured in from San Diego and Los Angeles, filling the track with well over twenty thousand people, many more than the track's official capacity. Lin plastered a twenty-foot LIGAROTI sign on the wall behind the "I'm for Ligaroti" section, and scores of Crosby's movie friends, including Clark Gable and Carole Lombard, Spencer Tracy and Ray Milland, took up their cerise and white pennants and filed in. "Is there anyone left in Hollywood?" wondered a spectator. Dave Butler led a chorus of Ligaroti cheers, and the crowd grew boisterous.

Crosby perched on the roof with Oscar Otis, who would call the race for a national radio broadcast. In the jockey's room, Woolf suited up to man the helm on Seabiscuit while Richardson slipped on Ligaroti's polka dots. Just before the race, Woolf and Richardson made a deal. No matter who won, they would "save," or split, the purse between them.

IT began as an exhilarating display of pure speed. To a gleeful shriek from the crowd, Seabiscuit and Ligaroti ripped out of the gate side by side. There was no clever strategy in either camp; each rider wanted the lead immediately. It was Seabiscuit who got it, tearing toward the first turn with his head in front. He couldn't shake Ligaroti off. They rounded the first turn and barreled into the backstretch locked together. Inch by inch, Ligaroti edged closer, then thrust his nose in front. A few strides later, Seabiscuit edged back to the lead again. After six furlongs, they were one-fifth of a second faster than the track record. The mile marker clipped by, and the tote board flashed the fraction: 1:36 1/5. The track record had been eclipsed by two seconds.

They couldn't, it seemed, keep up such a pace. With the crowd leaping and yelling, the two horses skimmed the far turn and straightened away for the run for the wire. Richardson was playing every card he had, hollering in Woolf's ear to try to distract him or provoke him into fouling himself out of the race.

With an eighth of a mile to go, Richardson felt Ligaroti beginning to weaken. The colt sagged inward, muscling his shoulder and hip into the smaller Seabiscuit. Hemmed in between Ligaroti and the rail, Seabiscuit had nowhere to go. He was driven to the left and for an awful moment nearly tumbled over the rail. He straightened himself out, grimly stood his ground, and held his head in front. Richardson kept right on yelling.

Seabiscuit had Ligaroti beaten. Richardson knew it. Desperate, the jockey resorted to an old bush-league tactic. Reaching across the gap between the two horses, he grabbed Seabiscuit's saddlecloth and pulled back hard. Woolf couldn't believe it. "What are you doing, Spec?" he shouted. Richardson didn't let go.

Seabiscuit was now towing Ligaroti down the homestretch. Woolf couldn't break him free. Anchored by Richardson's grasp, Ligaroti began to haul himself forward. The two horses drew together again, running stride for stride with Seabiscuit's head still in front. On their backs, Woolf and Richardson struggled. With seventy yards to go, Richardson abruptly released the saddlecloth and grabbed Woolf's whip hand. Woolf twisted around in the saddle, trying to snatch his wrist free. It was here, Richardson later said, that he locked his leg over Woolf's leg. If Seabiscuit moved up, Woolf would be scraped off his saddle and slammed into the track. The Howards' sporting gesture had disintegrated into a back-alley brawl.

With just a few yards to go, Woolf was frantic. Seabiscuit was fighting hard, but in Richardson's grasp, he could not break away. The wire was looming overhead and Ligaroti was lunging for the lead. Races in that day were not yet filmed with head-on and side-shot patrol cameras to police for riding infractions, so there was a good chance that Ligaroti would not be disqualified if his nose hit the wire first. Woolf could not move Seabiscuit up. He had to move Ligaroti back.

With twenty yards to go, Woolf tore his hand free, threw out his right arm and grabbed Ligaroti's bridle, just above the bit. Just as the wire passed overhead, he pulled back, lifting the horses's head up and to the left as Seabiscuit's head bobbed forward. Seabiscuit flew under the wire first. Lugging 130 pounds, Ligaroti, and Richardson, Seabiscuit had run nine furlongs in 1:49. He had broken the track record by four seconds, the equivalent of some twenty-five lengths.

Up on the clubhouse, Oscar Otis looked quizzically at the finish line. He had seen Ligaroti's head jerk up oddly at the wire. A jubilant celebration was going on all around him; almost no one else had noticed anything amiss. The reporters were raving. One called it the "dingbustingest contest you ever clapped an eye on

. . .a ripsnorting race." But the stewards, standing up on an infield platform right above the finish line, had seen everything. The INQUIRY sign blipped up on the board.

Richardson galloped back first, jumped off the horse, bounded up the stairs three at a time, and muddied up the stewards' stand carpets. Shouting passionately and waving his arms as he spoke, Richardson charged that Woolf had fouled him. The stewards called Woolf in. With his usual frankness, the Iceman admitted everything he had done but explained why he had done it. The stewards sent the jockeys outside while they conferred. The crowd buzzed in confusion.

Woolf and Richardson waited side by side on the track, Woolf with his hands on his hips, Richardson with his arms folded on the rail. Each one peered angrily out of the corner of his eye at the other, and neither said a word. Woolf was sure that Richardson was about to smack him.

The ruling came down. The foul was not allowed, and the result was allowed to stand. The baffled reporters asked the stewards why they had held an inquiry at all, but the stewards refused to explain themselves. Clearly, something was up; Woolf and Richardson were told not to accept any more mounts pending a meeting by the stewards.

The riders stomped to the jockeys' room, snapping at each other. The newsmen, in agonies of curiosity, tailed them. They overheard Richardson accusing Woolf of grabbing his bridle, and Woolf retorting that Richardson had grabbed his whip. Woolf said if Richardson had just stopped shouting for one single instant to concentrate on riding, he might have gotten his horse's nose in front.

Down in the winner's circle, Crosby could smell disaster. Standing with Marcela (Charles Howard's wife), he waited, sober-faced and distracted, as his wife — universally known as "Mrs. Bing" — gamely presented the winner's trophy to Charles. Lin and his father, laughing, shook hands. With the ceremony over, Crosby rushed after Woolf and Richardson. He found them on the verge of blows in the jockeys' room, with all the reporters watching. Desperate to avoid bad publicity, Crosby stepped between them and told them to hold their tongues, Marcela, more excited than she had ever been over a race, downed several aspirin.

The next morning the stewards called Woolf and Richardson in and threw the book at them. Not only were both suspended for the rest of the meeting, but the officials recommended that the state racing board ban them from all California tracks until January 1, 1939. It was a punishment tough enough to demand explanation, but the stewards still refused to reveal what had happened. In their zeal to avoid resurrecting the sport's reputation for chicanery, they tried to bury the incident. Asked to release official photos, they declined. "I want the newspapers to forget this thing," said the presiding steward. "Consequently, I have no further information to give."

A more suggestive comment could hardly have been made. The press covering the race was already suspicious and scandal-hungry, and assumed that the stewards were hiding something shocking. Wild speculation was the order of the day. Someone was bound to make a public accusation of wrongdoing. Someone did.

It began four days after the race, with a *San Diego Sun* story trumpeted in an enormous front-page banner headline in two-inch-high letters: "INSIDE" ON BISCUIT RACE BARED. Anonymously written, the story charged that Woolf admitted he had been told not to win by too much, to "make it look close" and "make a race of it." Richardson, the story alleged, knew that Seabiscuit was being held back and tried to take advantage of it to steal the race so he could cash in on a $1,500 bet on Ligaroti. Woolf then had to resort to dirty riding to thwart Richardson. The article speculated that the stewards' "secret investigation" may have revealed "the identity of the race figure who gave Woolf his orders," but that the officials were not telling the public.

At first glance, it seems surprising that the story caused the stir it did. The uproar was not over the rough riding in the race — which was truly outrageous — but over a supposed shadowy conspiracy around it. Yet, however much the tone of the article suggested otherwise, even if true, the allegations were trivial. As long as Woolf intended to win, there would have been nothing wrong with minimizing his winning margin. At most, it would have created a more entertaining spectacle and saved Bing, Lin, and Jimmy Smith from the humiliation of seeing their horse routed. Likewise, there certainly was nothing wrong with Richardson trying to win the race. But the paper presented these allegations as scandalous bombshells, calling them "startling disclosures." In an era in which the sport's corrupt years were still a fresh memory, it was enough to set the ball rolling. The story was picked up by the wire services and distributed nationwide.

A massive controversy ensued. Richardson immediately denied placing any bet, and Woolf denied that he had ever made any such statement or even spoken to any reporter. Though the allegations did not point to race-fixing, in the sensational atmosphere following the unexplained suspension of two jockeys, the race was now being referred to as a "frameup" and a "fix." Resting in the Del Mar Hotel, Howard saw the *Sun* story and exploded. He had long tolerated false allegations with tactful restraint, but he saw this as a strike against his honesty and an attempt to group him with the race-fixers from the sport's past. It brought him beyond rage.

Summoning a host of reporters to the hotel lobby, he lost his ever-genial composure for the first and only time in his public life. Barely able to contain his fury, he emphatically denied that he or Smith had given Woolf any such orders. He called the story "dirty and libel-

ous." "The whole thing is not worthy of denial," he hissed, "excepting that it is so vicious that it cannot be overlooked." He said that he had told Woolf to gun to the lead and get far enough ahead of Ligaroti to move to the outside; letting Seabiscuit's rival assume the rail would prevent Ligaroti, who often drifted in, from bumping him. It was only because Ligaroti was so fast, Howard said, that Woolf was unable to execute the plan. Most compelling was his final point: Given that both his splits and final time for the race were record-shattering, the idea that Seabiscuit had been restrained was preposterous.

"Any fool writing racing ought to know that a race run in 1:49, with the first mile in 1:36 1/5 and which was the time caught by numerous private clockers as well as the official track timer, couldn't be fixed in that manner," he said, glaring at the reporters. "I am deeply chagrined that any editor would accept a story without verification in which such obviously erroneous information is contained. . . .If the man who wrote that story had any sense, he would know you couldn't 'boat' a race run in that fast time."

Howard challenged the anonymous writer to produce proof of his charges and angrily defied anyone in the room to give him a plausible argument for how the allegations would have been possible. He concluded by addressing the implications that he was a race-fixer. "If Seabiscuit, or any other of my horses, can't win on their merits, I'd retire from racing today."

Howard followed up the press conference by publishing a signed statement that Woolf had not been told to check Seabiscuit. He wrote at least one prominent reporter personally, arguing that the race itself was testimony to the absurdity of the *Sun's* charges and enclosing the finish photo of the race — the reporter had evidently questioned whether or not Seabiscuit had crossed the line first. In his letter, Howard pointed to what he thought was the motivation behind the attack on his integrity: the rivalry with War Admiral. "I realize," he wrote, "that there are a few people in the East who are becoming quite alarmed over the prospect of Seabiscuit ending up as the top winner of the American turf."

Back at Del Mar, officials supported Howard, stating that the accusations that Seabiscuit had been restrained, or that Howard or Smith had told Woolf to do so, were ludicrous. But they couldn't stop the flood of charges. A movement began to deny Howard the purse money or prevent it from being officially credited to Seabiscuit.

The California Turf Writers Association, recognizing that a lack of official information had created this absurd situation, demanded that the stewards clear things up. The morning after Howard's speech, the Del Mar officials finally issued a statement explaining in detail exactly what had transpired during the race: Richardson had grabbed Woolf's saddlecloth, then his whip, then Woolf had grabbed Ligaroti's bridle. They emphasized their agreement that without the fouling, Seabiscuit would have won anyway.

Though the accusations died off quickly after the stewards' statement, Howard was still in a jam. He was jockeyless. Unsure of what to do, he suspended all of Seabiscuit's engagements.

Lin inadvertently solved the problem for him. He firmly believed that Richardson had not fouled Woolf enough to merit banning him from the track for the rest of the year. He discovered that, evidently unbeknownst to anyone, someone had filmed the race. Lin bought the film and, before viewing it, asked the stewards and reporters to join him at a theater in Solana Beach to see it. Delighted at the chance to find out what really happened, a mob showed up. The lights dimmed and the film ran.

Lin turned crimson. The film showed Richardson committing every foul short of shooting Woolf off his horse. Woolf had clearly acted in self-defense. The press began to lobby to have the suspension overturned for Woolf. The state racing board, tired of the whole mess, realized that the race's non-betting status gave them an out because the public had not been defrauded. They opted to lift the suspensions on both jockeys after the Del Mar meeting concluded.

The moment the result was handed down, Howard contacted Woolf. Pack up your things, he told him. We're going east to get War Admiral.

Smith led Seabiscuit along the road that wound up to the railroad siding. The train stood waiting, stocked for a long sojourn in the East. A flurry of Navy planes screamed overhead, low enough to part a man's hair. The horse didn't bat an eyelash. He tramped aboard the train and lay down. By the time Smith got settled in and the train whined into motion, Seabiscuit was fast asleep.

Bing with Lin Howard

Gary Giddins' Book A Success, But. . .

Little, Brown is satisfied with the sales of *Bing Crosby: A Pocketful Of Dreams.* Its ledger sheets are in the black, but author Gary Giddins' are not. Sales were not robust enough for him to make any money out of the ten percent he receives. And he faults his publisher for not promoting the book more aggressively.

Although the book had wide critical acclaim and made the *New York Times* best-selling list for six weeks, no second printing was made. And the book will not be published in Europe. However, Giddins told *Bingang* that Little, Brown had indicated to him they would give it a second release prior to the holidays.

One happy piece of news is that a second volume will definitely be published. While no exact date is set, "it is contracted," Giddins said via phone.

In a hectic promotion tour, Gary visited nine major cities. The best turnout was in Spokane, WA. About 200 people were there, which is said to be a very large number for a single visit. The worst was Atlanta, GA. "No one showed up."

He did many, many radio interviews. He doesn't remember how many. A major television interview with host Charlie Rose appeared on PBS. Gary says Rose was very well prepared, that he had read two-thirds of the book and told him before the broadcast "You're the Crosby expert. I'll just ask the questions."

His most pleasant tour experience was in Chicago, where he met one of his heroes, Studs Terkel, a best-selling author, jazz critic, disc jockey, social historian and raconteur and last, but not least, a Bing Crosby fan. "We spent a couple of hours at his place drinking bourbon and branch water."

It pleased Gary that the book was given a thumbs-up by family members. Bing's son Harry gave him a "bear hug" and said he had read half the book so far and had learned much about Bing and his family that he did not know. He met Nathaniel in Miami, and he also approved of the book. Another relative who was pleased with the book's accuracy is Howard Crosby, Bing's nephew and son of his brother Ted, who said: "I know. I was there."

So far Bing's widow Kathryn has not cooperated in any way. "She just refuses to talk to me," said Gary.

— *Pete Cakanic*

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We thank all the members who sent in copies of reviews they found in their newspapers and magazines. Thanks to them — and to Steve Lewis and the Internet Museum — we have a *big* scrapbook of these reviews. We could have filled up the entire magazine with them, but have had to settle for a few excerpts.

— *Wayne Martin*

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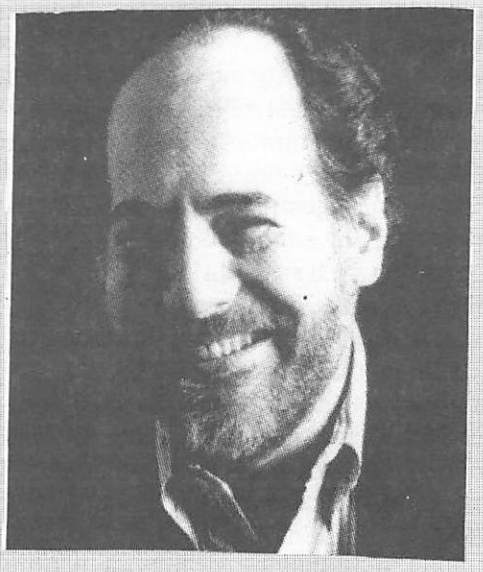
"If venerable Village Voice jazz critic Gary Giddins. . .has anything to do with it, Crosby is about to take a giant leap forward in the pop culture canon. In his expertly detailed *Bing Crosby: A Pocketful of Dreams,* the first volume of a planned two-part biography of the singer-actor. Giddins attempts to re-establish Crosby's credentials as a musical innovator and cultural force."

— John D. Thomas, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution.*



Gary Giddins, "Author of the Year"

"Perhaps what has taken Giddins all this time — apart from working on his award-winning *Visions Of Jazz* and on the Ken Burns project 'Jazz' — has been the difficulty of grappling with a subject who so successfully presented himself as simple, even transparent, yet who actually was enigmatic, even opaque. Previous biographies have been either idolatrous or (as Giddins calls one of them) 'scurrilous.' This new account may at times overinflate Crosby's significance, but when the facts are unpretty we aren't spared them. Most of all, though, Giddins is in love with Crosby the singer, and here his knowledge of popular singing gives the book weight and value that no other account commands. . .

"Gary Giddins has performed a great service in tracking Crosby's life and career so scrupulously. He's not only superb on the music, but he has lovingly considered the films of the 30's — he's particularly perceptive about the vaudevillian "Road" pictures (Crosby and Hope 'are anarchists with great souls'). Sometimes his prose gets a touch fancy or peculiar — a song treatment is 'supernally relaxed,' his work 'failed to sate Bing's energy.' Bing 'had haplessly incarnated the excesses of Prohibition." — and one can argue with certain judgments is Crosby really a 'far more important artist' than John McCormack? But these are hardly blemishes on a masterly performance. Some readers may feel that this book tells them too much. But those of us who have been waiting all these years to learn everything there is to know about Crosby can only be grateful for Giddins' depth of detail and soundness of judgment. Now, where is Volume 2?"

— Robert Gottlieb, *New York Times.*

"In the superb *Bing Crosby: A Pocketful Of Dreams,* Gary

Giddins is quick to acknowledge his subject's dwindling mystique — the result, he argues, 'of having played Everyman too long and too well.' But Giddins also makes a strong case for Crosby as the prime mover of American pop culture, who shaped it in his own affable image for more than three decades."

— James Marcus, *Atlantic Monthly.*

"The long-awaited biography of Bing Crosby by jazz historian Gary Giddins at last reflects the light of day. Or at least part of it does. At 700+ pages, *A Pocketful of Dreams* follows Bing's career only to 1940, necessitating a second volume that, if as detailed as the first volume will rival the length of an unabridged dictionary. Giddins' biography is quite a contrast to two previous books about Bing: *The Hollow Man* by Shepherd and Slatzer and *Going My Own Way* by Gary Crosby. These books clearly had an axe to grind, and to boost sales they labored to create a tabloid contrast to the public persona of Bing. These were fundamentally exploitive books meant more to shock than to enlighten. Giddins, on the other hand, is no hatchet man, but a respected scholar who focuses most of his attention on Bing's development as an artist and the impact of his art on western culture."

— Steven Lewis, *Bing Crosby Internet Museum.*

"The challenge for Mr. Giddins is to generate interest in an artist whose work is mostly forgotten and whose reputation as a genial character has been battered by two previous works. . . .Mr. Giddins argues that with the publication in the early 1980's of these 'savage' and unreliable accounts, 'The fading portrait of the imperturbable crooner, the soul of affection, the totem of cool, was replaced by the cruel rendering of a pinch-faced, right-wing, child-beating philanderer.' *A Pocketful Of Dreams,* though in other respects disappointing, succeeds in telling the story of a pop icon who was thoroughly, lovingly *liked;* Mr. Giddins shows us a man who was anything but 'hollow.'"

— Rich Conaty, *New York Observer.*

"'Ever since he first opened his mouth, Bing was the Boss of All Singers and still is,' Giddins believes. By the end of Part One, the reader does, too."

— John Anderson, *Newsday.*

"When Crosby was beginning to hit his stride in the late 1920s, most crowd-pleasing male singers were 'effeminate tenors,' the author notes, and recording artists were urged to be as vanilla-flavored as possible, the better to move sheet music out of the store. As Giddins points out, the term 'pop singer' didn't exist. In fact it was coined to describe the breed Crosby invented."

— Joanne Kaufman, *People.*

"Giddins brings to his challenging task a wide and deep knowledge of American jazz and popular music, and therefore is ideally suited for reassessing Bing Crosby's place in American popular music — perhaps the most important white singer of the 20th century."

— Earl Dachslager, *Houston Chronicle*

"On the important matters. . . Giddins gets it right. While it is always interesting to learn where the public man and the private man connect and disconnect, it is the former upon whom the biographer properly focuses, for it is the public life that justifies the biography in the first place. . . .Giddins has a keen understanding of who Bing Crosby was, how he got that way, and why he was so widely, gratefully loved. I await his second volume with eager expectation."

Jonathan Yardley, *The Washington Post.*

"Why read a long book about Bing Crosby? And especially one that covers the part of his life that most would agree was eclipsed by the glory of his later years? One answer lies on page 246 of [the book]: 'Bing would continue to average sixteen charted singles per year through 1950, peaking in 1939 with 27 (a feat broken only by the Beatles in 1964 with 30), never falling below double digits until 1951, when he placed nine singles in the top 25. This unparalleled 25-year accomplishment is not likely ever to be equaled.' Take that, Eminem. Another lies on page 266: 'Crosby was a man whom the audience thought it knew almost as well as a member of the family but who was, in fact, known to very few. Cool and efficient in his private manner he was...exceptionally intimate when he sang. He never bellowed...We liked his easiness, the intelligence behind his interpretation of the lyrics. Everything he did depended upon intelligence and he certainly had that.'. . .The 20th century is expired no matter how you count the years, and as the generations pass, there is the possibility that the mark made by Harry Lillis Crosby will be reduced to a footnote. Hence, 720 pages about Crosby might turn out to be not enough. Author Gary Giddins gives an unusually detailed look at a life that was thought to be highly public, but that was also artfully concealed and hence private."

John Smyntek, *Knight Ridder News Service.*

". . .Let's hearken well to Giddins when he declares that Bing Crosby's was 'the voice of the nation, the cannily informal personification of hometown decency — friendly, unassuming, melodious, irrefutably American.' Or just put 'Make Believe' back on the turntable, drop the tone arm (it has to be a tone arm) into place and be astonished yet again by this daring, dazzling young man who challenged the world on his own terms and triumphed so hearteningly, and lastingly, well."

Richard M. Sudhalter, *Los Angeles Times.*

"Giddins is a dangerous critic; his writing is so evocative he can make you think yourself intimate with music you've never even heard. Naturally, Crosby's voice and cadences of speech, so indelibly etched upon multiple generations of Americans, echo through *A Pocketful Of Dreams,* which makes an unshakable case for his greatness at the least as an artist. Color-blind both literally and musically, Crosby was one of the few white artists in jazz or pop to influence the major black artists of the time (the Mills Brothers, to cite one example), and few pop singers, even now, can claim to have escaped his sway."

John Anderson, *Newsday.*

Giddins has always written acutely on both film and music, and he has become a fine cultural historian. . . .Only in Giddins's hands does Crosby come to life as not just a celebrity but a great, pivotal musician. We learn about the common ground between the Irish music of Crosby's heritage and the African American jazz that Crosby came to love, and we find ourselves caught up in the Archimedean swirl of technological and societal developments — the microphone, sound recording, and radio that gave Crosby the opening to transform popular music into an intimately personal form of expression that could cross old boundaries of race and class. In one virtuoso section, Giddins details the rise of electrified sound and ruminates on the excitement and anxiety it provoked. . . .The passage is a performance as economically commanding as a Louis Armstrong solo.

David Hajdu, *The Village Voice.*

"HAIRY" LILLIS CROSBY

When Bing arrived back in New York City from Europe in mid-October 1944, he was sporting a completely new look. He purportedly grew the beard while on board ship on the way back from entertaining the Allied troops overseas. LIFE magazine and several other publications made note of it.

Unable to get back to the West Coast in time, he was still wearing it when he went to the NBC radio studios in New York on October 12th where he was patched into his own Kraft Music Hall show which was being broadcast from Los Angeles.

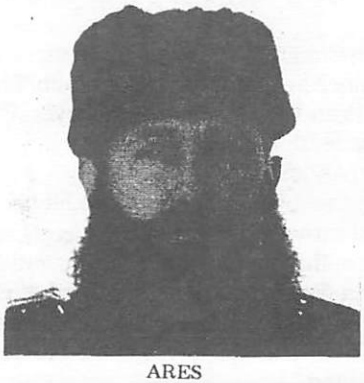
He recorded two songs for Decca the next day and then, for some reason, instead of returning directly to California, he decided to take a short vacation at his ranch in Elko, Nevada. He finally headed back to Los Angeles in early November and, if memory serves me right, he showed up for the November 9th KMH broadcast still unshaven, a fact mentioned by both his announcer and his guests. It was gone by the next show as Bing got back to his heavy schedule of recording, broadcasting, and making motion pictures. M.S.

Sirs:

Several months ago Bing Crosby returned home from overseas sprouting an oversized beard.

In your story on Greece I came face to beard with the photograph of Ares, guerilla chief of Greece, and I was struck with his amazing resemblance to Bing.

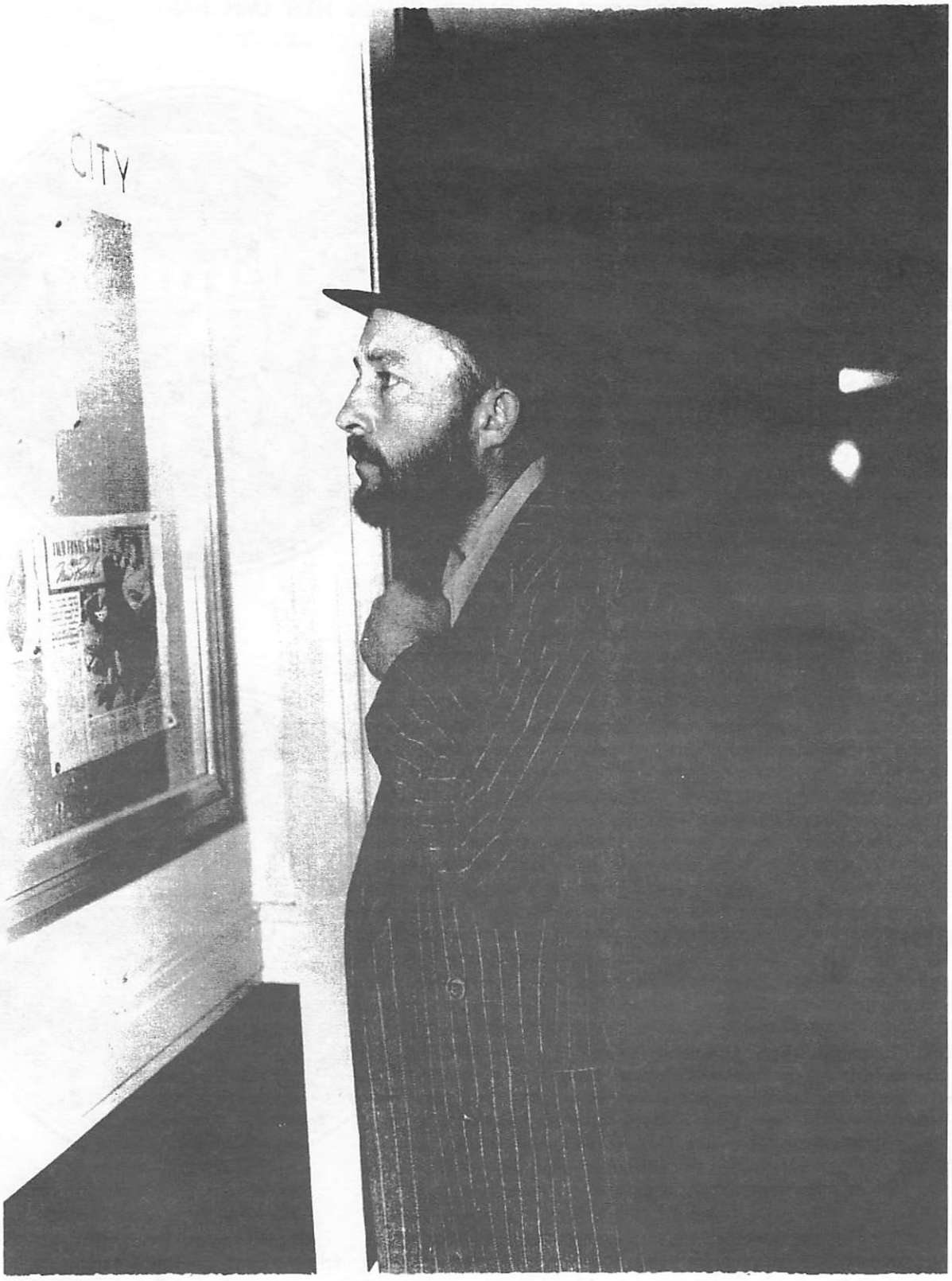
GEORGE McCURRACH
Brooklyn, N. Y.



ARES

BING

Above: Bing at the NBC microphone in New York City. Right: A mention in the "Letters To The Editor" section of the December 18, 1944 issue of LIFE magazine about Bing's beard.



Bing studies an article about himself on a bulletin board outside the radio studio.

CROONER CROSBY'S DEBUT DISC

A 1929 MAGAZINE ARTICLE HERALDS BING'S FIRST SOLO RECORDING RELEASED UNDER HIS OWN NAME

Bing Crosby Is New Columbia Record Star

Member of Paul Whiteman's "Rhythm Boys" Records "My Kinda Love," and "Till We Meet," for First Release

Bing Crosby, one of Paul Whiteman's three "Rhythm Boys," is a new Columbia artist.

He comes from Spokane, Washington, where he and Al Rinker, another member of the Rhythm trio, founded a school band. Although but twenty-four years old, he has been with Whiteman three years, playing with him forty weeks on Publix circuit, also in the Paul Whiteman Club, Ziegfeld's Midnight Frolic, and for another forty weeks in Keith-Albee vaudeville, as a member of the Rhythm Boys.

At present Crosby is featured in Whiteman's Old Gold Hour of Broadcast, and it is probable that he will appear in Paul's new talking picture, "The King of Jazz," on which Universal starts work in May. Bing Crosby's first Columbia record offers the songs "My Kinda Love," and "Till We Meet."

Bing Crosby

After attending a recent program I gave about Bing's earliest recordings, fellow record collector, Charles Gregory, kindly sent me this article, which comes from a May 1929 issue of a magazine he has called *Talking Machine World & Radio.* He thought I might find it of some interest. It appears to be an early attempt to launch Bing as a solo performer. At the time, unfortunately, the record buying public didn't recognize greatness when they heard it. Bing would have to toil several more years as a band singer before getting his big break in 1931. I wonder if this article was the result of some self-promotion on Bing's part or if Columbia Records and particularly Paul Whiteman (who had Crosby under contract) might have had some financial stake in seeing Bing succeed as a solo artist when crooners, such as Rudy Vallee and others, were just coming into vogue. Certainly the song selections, and Bing's delivery of them, indicate a stylistic move in that direction. M.S.

Bing In Hollywood

By David Lobosco

High Time

(20th Century Fox, 1960)

EVEN though I have been out of college close to three years now, I still long for my college days. They were among the best days of my life. Seeing Bing Crosby go back to school in *High Time* takes me back to those college years. The film itself is not much. By the 1960s standards it was no hit, but there is something charming about the movie.

The movie was filmed in Hollywood and at Wake Forest University in North Carolina from February to June of 1960. It should have been completed in less time, but an actors' strike during March and April crippled production for five weeks.

The story, written by Garson Kanin, was originally intended for Spencer Tracy, but he turned it down. Instead, he took a commanding film role in the classic *Judgement At Nuremburg*. Directed by a young Blake Edwards, who later directed *The Pink Panther*, *High Time* also boasted a musical score by Henry Mancini.

In the film, Bing Crosby plays Harvey Howard, a restaurant tycoon, who decides in his 50s to go back to college. Instead of just "buying" his degree, he decides that he wants the full treatment of college life, including living on campus.

At first the other classmates, old enough to be Bing's own children, feel awkward having an "old guy" in their classes, but Bing makes it loud and clear that he is just "one of the guys." Bing also finds true love "the second time around" when he falls for his French teacher, beautifully played by Nicole Maurey.

Miss Maurey starred with Bing in 1953's *Little Boy Lost* and took the role in *High Time* only ten days before shooting started. She had not seen a script, but she jumped at the chance to star with Bing again.

It really is amazing to see a grown man going through all the troubles that normal college students have. In the end, Bing passes with flying colors, and as usual he gets the girl in Nicole Maurey. The major shortcoming I see in the film is that after Bing's freshman year in college, not much is shown until he graduates. Now I know only so much could be squeezed into a 103-minute film, but I would have like to have seen much more shown.

Bing, wigged, gowned and powdered, prepares for a funny scene in *High Time*.

The supporting cast boasts some of the 1960s' most popular teen stars like Fabian, Tuesday Weld, and Richard Beymer. Also look for Gavin MacLeod *(Mary Tyler Moore* and *Love Boat)* in a supporting role as a clumsy chemistry teacher. The film is more of a comedy than a musical, but Sammy Cahn and Jimmy Van Heusen did write two songs for *High Time*. One was a big hit for Fabian called "Nobody's Perfect." The other song would be one of the last hits Bing Crosby introduced. When Bing sang "The Second Time Around," he made all of the new teen singer-stars sound like Tiny Tim. Even at the age of 57, Bing could still croon like no one else could.

Again — *High Time* is not a great Bing Crosby movie, but it definitely will grow on you. Watch it a couple of times, and maybe you'll agree with me "the second time around."

Comparing Crosby, Sinatra

By Nick Clooney

William Mayer of Cincinnati opened up an interesting arena for debate. "I couldn't believe that *Time* magazine in their article on entertainers of the century glorified Frank Sinatra and completely omitted Bing Crosby. . .[Bing] seems to be slighted in so many polls and articles . . .Would like your opinion."

There is no doubt Mr. Crosby was largely ignored in all the "best of the century" pieces I have read. Part of the problem was, in show business terms, timing. Bing had the poor judgement to die in the 1970s, while Frank waited until the last minute to make his exit. The most recent experience always looms infinitely larger than any from the distant past. It's human nature.

Since just about any designation of "best" in the arts or entertainment has to be subjective, it seems fair to point out two factors which might weigh against Mr. Crosby. First, his private life was private, period. Frank's, on the other hand, was often played out in public. Then there was The Book. Gary Crosby's scorching indictment of his father struck just as baby boomers were raising their own children and were much into child psychology, pop and otherwise. Denials by Gary's brothers and other family members and friends cut no ice with many. Gary had hit first and viciously. His deliberate damage to his father's reputation was, in my view, permanent.

Frank's leaving of Nancy, his other high-profile marriages, his highly publicized problems with his own children, on the other hand, almost seemed to enhance his reputation.

Still, it is fair to take up Mr. Mayer's question and use the most nearly objective criteria we can find for a fair comparison. Records. Movies. Broadcasting. Personal appearances.

Personal appearances. Frank has a clear advantage. He staged many more concerts than Bing for a much longer time, did more of what he called "saloon" work and was with big bands on the road longer than Bing. Bing shied away from concerts until his last years, except for the scores of appearances for troops during World War II.

This, however, is the last category in which Frank has the edge.

Records. From 1931 until 1965, Bing Crosby had an astonishing 39 No. 1 single records. That's nearly double the next artist. Moreover, in that same span he had an incredible 361 single records that appeared on contemporary hit lists. Included was the top-selling single of all time, "White Christmas." (The Elton John single honoring Princess Diana was a fund-raiser and so, in my opinion, should not be listed in this category.

Frank had a respectable seven No. 1 singles and a remarkable 170 releases on various hit charts from 1942 to 1980. He also had excellent album sales in postwar years, but this is not a good area for comparison, because album sales were not major factors in the 1930s and 1940s, Bing's biggest years. Similarly, Frank received 11 Grammys, but there were no Grammys in Bing's heyday.

Movies. However, there were movies and there were Oscars. Bing appeared in 70 feature films. He was three times nominated as best actor and he won the Oscar once. He was on the Top Ten box office list an amazing 15 times and was No. 1 in the world five times.

Frank made 50 features. He won the Oscar for best supporting actor once and was nominated for best actor. He made the Top Ten box-office list five times, never at No. 1.

Broadcasting. Both had radio shows. Bing's was regularly in the Top Ten for more than a decade. Frank's greatest success was as featured singer on "Your Hit Parade." Neither had sustained success in television.

One more thing should be noted. Bing Crosby virtually invented the solo pop singer, not associated with a band. Frank always generously acknowledged that fact. "Without Bing, there never could have been a Frank." Dean Martin, Frank's friend, was more specific. "Every one of us followed in Bing's footsteps."

Frank Sinatra was a great entertainer. The greatest of the century? Perhaps. On the other hand, Mr. Mayer, perhaps Bing just made it all look too easy. It wasn't, you know.

—From *The Cincinnati Post,* June 5, 2000.

Editor's note: Nick Clooney, brother of Rosemary and father of George, writes for *The Post* frequently. This article was contributed by Carmel Gallegos.

"White Christmas" Ranks No. 2

In March of this year, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Recording Industry Association of America jointly issued a list of the 365 top songs of the 20th century, along with the names of the artists who had hit recordings of the songs. The list was published in a number of newspapers around the country.

"White Christmas" ranked No. 2 on the list, being topped only by Judy Garland's "Over The Rainbow." In addition, Bing's "Pennies From Heaven" is listed as No. 129.

It's a remarkably "inclusive" listing, going back as far as the acoustical period of recording with such artists as Enrico Caruso, John McCormack, and Louise Homer (all opera singers) and Billy Murray and the Peerless Quartet (popular singers of that time). Country singers such as Roy Acuff and the original Carter family, big bands (no Tommy Dorsey, though), other vocalists from Bing's era, and current performers are also included. It's quite a list, and as a whole it's well worth your time to take a look at it. W.M.

Perry Como Is Dead

By The Associated Press

PERRY COMO, the crooning baritone barber famous for his relaxed vocals, sweaters and television Christmas specials, died Saturday (May 12, 2001) after a lengthy illness. Sources differ on whether he was 87 or 88. Mr. Como died in his sleep at his home in Jupiter Inlet Beach Colony, Fla., his daughter Terry Thibadeau said.

"We spent two beautiful hours (Friday) with Dad, me and my grandson, Holden," she told the *Palm Beach Post.* "We shared ice cream. It was a wonderful moment for us."

Mr. Como was a charming Italian-American whose name became synonymous with mellow, performing through seven decades, starting in the 1930s. His idol, the late singer Bing Crosby, once called Mr. Como "the man who invented casual."

Mr. Como left his job as a steel town barber to sing with big bands in the 1930s, and his songs were a mainstay of radio and jukeboxes in the late 1940s. He helped pioneer variety shows on the new medium of television in the 1950s and performed on television specials over the last four decades. His music remained popular in recent years on easy-listening radio.

In 1945, Mr. Como had his first million-selling hit, "Till The End Of Time." It was among many songs, including "Prisoner Of Love," that topped the charts. He competed with Frank Sinatra and Crosby to be the era's top crooner.

While Mr. Como emulated Crosby in his early years, some of his best-known numbers were light novelty songs, such as "Hot Diggity" and "Papa Loves Mambo." He made a brief foray into wartime movie musicals in Hollywood but decided to pursue a career in radio.

Mr. Como often said he far preferred singing romantic ballads to some of the lightweight numbers, but the novelty songs were a frequent audience request.

"They got tired of hearing 'Melancholy Baby' and those mushy things," Mr. Como said in a 1994 interview. "But those are the songs that, as a singer, you love to sing."

Mr. Como made his television debut in 1948 on NBC's "The Chesterfield Supper Club," and in 1950 he switched to CBS for "The Perry Como Show," which ran for five years. He then returned to NBC for a variety show that ran for eight years, first on Saturday nights opposite Jackie Gleason, then on Tuesday nights.

Rock 'n' Roll eventually crowded out the crooners who once charmed hordes of screaming bobby-soxers. His career saw a resurgence in the 1970s with songs like "It's Impossible," "And I Love You So," and several best-selling Christmas albums. In 1987, former President Ronald Reagan presented Mr. Como with a Kennedy Center award for outstanding achievement in the performing arts.

In 1994, Mr. Como put out a three-CD boxed set including his most popular songs since he started recording in 1943. And his former hit, "Catch A Falling Star," became familiar to a new generation of fans when it became part of the Clint Eastwood-Kevin Costner movie *A Perfect World.*

His laid-back reputation grew from his first appearances on the pioneering medium of live television — with its crashing scenery, misplaced cue cads and camera confusion.

Bing Crosby and Perry Como

"I decided the only thing to do was take it as it came," he recalled in a 1985 interview. "People wrote in asking how I could be so casual. It all started to grow."

Pierino Roland Como was born in Canonsburg, Pa., the middle offspring of 13 children of Italian immigrants. At age 11, he went to work sweeping floors after school at a barbershop in the town just south of Pittsburgh. He got lessons on how to cut the hair of coal miners and other workers, and by the age of 14 he had his own barber business, earning $150 a week. His pay dropped off during the Depression when he went to work for another barber.

But he got an offer to sing with Freddie Carlone's band in Cleveland in the early 1930s. He began his rise in show business when he was signed to sing with Ted Weems' big band in 1936, a relationship that continued for six years.

In 1943, he began what turned into a 50-year contract with RCA-Victor Records with the recording of the song "Goodbye Sue."

In his later years, Mr. Como lived a private semi-retirement with his wife, Roselle, whom he met at a picnic when he was 16 and married in 1933. They divided their time between the North Carolina mountains and Jupiter, Fla., where he played golf, took long, brisk walks and entertained his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. His wife died in August 1998, less than two weeks after she and Como celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. She was 84.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 13, 2001

Bing Crosby—The Voice of the Century

By J. Roger Osterholm

BING CROSBY recorded about 2600 records, counting some duplicates, and sold at least 500 million "single" recordings and albums. Most sources attribute only 1700 recorded songs to Der Bingle, but *The Guinness Book of World Records* of 1990 notes a firm number of 2600 single records.

These numbers increase if we add the songs sung and recorded for his long-standing popular radio programs and television shows, and also if we make a reasonable estimate of the number of recordings sold before the Decca era that began only in 1934 and later in current CDs. By 1934 Crosby was already a celebrated singer who had sold hundreds of thousands of records, especially on the Brunswick label. After 1955 he recorded for other labels.

The Guinness Book of 1999 states that Crosby had 299 "Top 20" singles in the United States, with 38 reaching number one. This exceeds Presley, who had 18 Number One singles and 9 Number One albums in the United States.

Bing amassed 23 gold records, including three late albums. His first gold record was "Sweet Leilani," recorded in 1937. At that time there was only a handful of million-selling recordings by anyone. Bing was not the first singer to have "gold records," but he was certainly present at the creation. He was also awarded platinum discs for his two biggest sellers, "White Christmas" and "Silent Night." He was himself convinced, as he often said, that "Silent Night" probably outsold "White Christmas." Some of his recordings have been "in print" for more than 60 years.

Many sources cite that Bing Crosby sold more than 400 million copies, but this number is woefully underestimated. If we accept a number of four million just for each gold record, this accounting alone amounts to 92 million, and the sales of Crosby's "White Christmas" seem to be up to 130 million all by themselves. If "Silent Night" is a bigger seller, together these two recordings could amount to 260 million for just two songs of the 2600 recordings.

The Guinness Book of World Records, 1997 notes that "White Christmas" had a total worldwide sales of more than 170 million in all versions by the first half of 1987—15 years ago.

Guinness seems to confuse itself, for in another edition it relates all those sales just to the Crosby versions, but surely Crosby's versions amount to possibly as much as 150 million copies of just this one Berlin song.

In 1990 *Guinness* noted that Bing sold 200 million recordings in his early career, and produced 2600 singles and 125 albums. If Bing Crosby sold about 150 million records of just one song, and he had 22 other gold records, and many more Number One top-sellers, it is hard to imagine that he sold less than 500 million recordings. Bing had 1 gold record in the 1930s, 18 in the 1940s, 3 in the 1950s, and 2 in the 1970s. The *Guinness* book of 1990 credits 300,650,000 recordings to Bing just from Decca by September 15, 1970, and Bing was exclusively with Decca just from 1934 to 1955.

We must ignore as a momentary confusion the detraction in the *Guinness Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 2d ed., 1995: "Crosby's way with a song was not always what songwriters might have wanted. Indeed, some of Crosby's recordings indicate a scant regard for the meaning of lyrics and unlike, say, Frank Sinatra, he was never an interpreter of songs." This anonymous critic may prefer Sinatra's brashness, but Crosby certainly sensitively and most effectively interpreted lyrics his way, which few other people would contest. A more appropriate judgment is found in *All Music Guide to Jazz:* "Bing Crosby had a major influence on jazz singers... With the exception of Cliff Edwards, few white singers were worth listening to. Bing Crosby's friendly baritone voice and easy sense of swing saved the world from being overrun by Rudy Vallee imitators and boy tenors!"

Another book, *The Top 10 of Everything* (1997) by Russell Ash, underestimates that by 1997 Crosby's top-grossing record, "White Christmas," had sold 90 million copies, while the second highest seller was a record by Bill Haley and His Comets at 17 million. The Beatles came in third with a 12-million seller, and Elvis Presley fourth with two each at 10 million.

Perhaps the version of "Candle in the Wind" revised by Elton John in commemoration of Princess Diana in 1997 has now become the single best-selling recording all in a month or two, but this may be true only if we disregard the probable sales of "White Christmas" sung by Bing Crosby on many seasonal releases. Very likely, Crosby's own three major versions of "White Christmas" have indeed sold at least 100 million copies and possibly up to 160 million.

It is curious, and clearly a mistake, that *Time Almanac 2000*, citing reliable sources, lists the Elton John song at 11 million, far below the "Top-Selling Certified Albums of All Time," in which the Eagles and Michael Jackson stand at the top with albums reaching 25 million in sales, without an album by Crosby reaching even the threshold of 10 million, according to this short-sighted source (p. 719).

Joel Whitburn, the foremost source for popular

recordings, lists songs that topped the charts from 1890 to 1954 and later. In his books Whitburn lists 45 Crosby records that became Number One sellers, from "My Blue Heaven" with Jack Fulton in 1927. Bing Crosby had 3 Number One best-selling records in the 1920s, 24 in the 1930s, 17 in the 1940s, and the "Merry Christmas" album of 1957. Recordings by Crosby that were in the top 40 through those years amount to 28 in the 1920s, 171 in the 1930s, 132 in the 1940s, and 37 from 1950 to 1958.

The important factor is that Bing earned these lofty numbers when the population was only half that in America by 2000, and much of it through the 1930s, when half of America was impoverished in the Great Depression and record sales were painfully low.

Bing Crosby was assuredly the Voice of the Twentieth Century, for he was the most loved, not just most popular, and his songs came continuously from every medium for thirty solid years, from 1928 to 1958, from personal appearances, recordings, radio, motion pictures, and then television for 52 years overall.

One new fact that just came to light is that from about 1938 to 1941, Bing Crosby served as the President of the Hollywood Chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America. Another chapter in New York City was led by Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia (Nicholas Shonimsky, *Music Since 1900,* 4th ed., Scribner's, 1971, pp. 667-68).

Gene Autry had a major Western song before Crosby, but then Bing entered the field and produced a few in the 1930s to share the eminence in that genre. Crosby is also among the leaders even today in many jazz songs, seasonal songs, religious, Irish, Hawaiian, and many other types. His vocal presence is so widespread and excellent that most others pale by comparison.

In the category of film songs Crosby also stands out with 55 listings in *The Official Price Guide to Movie/TV Soundtracks and Original Cast Albums* by Jerry Osborne, 1991. Others who have listings about as long are all composers—John Barry has the longest at 57. Even Anthony Newley, who is entered as both a singer and composer, has only 45 entries. Elvis Presley has 33 and Sinatra 19.

Crosby's voice was most admired and imitated, and the style he developed in crooning to a microphone was adopted by a considerable tribe led by Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, Dean Martin, and ultimately Elvis Presley.

Other singers, including Satchmo Armstrong, Tony Bennett, Dinah Shore, Judy Garland, and Mildred Bailey deserve mention, but however tremendous these other vocal talents are, Bing Crosby remains paramount as a singer. Armstrong might well lead the parade, however, if we include instrumentalists as well as vocalists.

Just one more fact to suggest the preeminence of Bing Crosby as a person and singer is the reference in the 1997 film *Paradise Road,* about Australian women imprisoned in Sumatra by the Japanese in World War Two. One of these women wonders aloud in the fall of 1944 just what Bing Crosby might have been doing that night, just as English peasants used to wonder what the king was doing on any particular night.

Bing Crosby was the king of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s; and he was also a major figure in the 1920s, 1960s, and 1970s as well. For well over 50 years he dominated the American pop industry. If we consider only the major singers after 1955, then we might underestimate the presence of the master, Bing Crosby.

Many people have been misled on Crosby's character in reports by only two eyewitness accounts of the Groaner, lurid tales by Al Rinker and Bing's son Gary. Now people admit that Gary has told them that his unfair slander of his father was from his own intoxicated state and largely to please his publisher, and Rinker was primarily sour at his own relatively meager career.

Bing Crosby, it is now clear to all, was a nice, modest, reasonable man, a model of civility, and to most people he was the master of popular music. The new book on Crosby by Gary Giddins, *A Pocketful of Dreams,* demonstrates that Gary Crosby was way off base and that Bing was a nice guy, after all. Now the new and favorable light has to sink in to replace the polluted air that has been broadcast for the past quarter century.

A useful quote by Henry Pleasants appears in the *New Grove Dictionary of American Music* in its entry on Crosby: "Crosby was one of the first singers to master the use of the microphone, and even more than Al Jolson (whose singing his early recordings reflect), he was important in introducing into the mainstream of American popular singing an Afro-American concept of song as a lyrical extension of speech. He was one of the first crooners, using the microphone not so much for singing as for apparently talking (or even whispering) to a melody."

Hundreds of quotes could be added to substantiate that Bing Crosby rightfully stands alone, however modestly he would, on the pedestal of the Voice of the Twentieth Century.

—*Editor's Note:* J. Roger Osterholm, Ph. D., Professor of the Humanities at Embry-Riddle University, Daytona Beach, Florida, is a member of Club Crosby. His book, *Bing Crosby, A Bio-Bibliography,* published by Greenwood Press in 1994, is an important reference to Crosby fans everywhere.

This article was researched with help from Lynn Prine and Christine Poucher of the Jack Hunt Library, Embry-Riddle University, and other libraries.

WAX FACTS

LITTLE KNOWN DISCOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION RELATING TO SOME OF BING'S RECORDINGS

COLUMBIA RECORDS PRESSED AND RELEASED IN ROYAL BLUE WAX

from COLUMBIA ROYAL BLUE RECORD CATALOGUE – NOVEMBER 1934

Bing Crosby – Vocal	1851-D
	2001-D
Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra	1402-D
	1444-D
	1771-D
	1945-D
	1993-D
	2010-D
	2023-D
	2163-D
	2170-D
	50070-D
	50098-D
Whiteman's Rhythm Boys – Vocal Trio	1455-D
	1629-D
	1819-D
	2223-D

AN OVERALL VIEW OF V-DISC RELEASE DATES BY MONTH AND YEAR

from V-DISCS – A HISTORY AND DISCOGRAPHY

NUMBER	RELEASE DATE
1	10/43
91	1/44
201	6/44
341	1/45
441	6/45
561	1/46
636	6/46
716	1/47
766	6/47
816	1/48
846	6/48
876	1/49
905 (last)	5/49
NAVY SERIES	
1	7/44
121	1/45
221	6/45
275 (last)	9/45

SALES FIGURES OF PAUL WHITEMAN ORCH. RECORDS ON VICTOR AND COLUMBIA

from BIX – MAN AND LEGEND

VICTOR		SALES
21240	Sunshine	88,866
21341	Dancing Shadows	36,491
21398	You Took Advantage Of Me/Do I HearYou Saying	46,282
21438	Louisiana	33,462
21453	It Was The Dawn Of Love	31,119
21678	Grieving	35,370
35992	High Water	4,904
COLUMBIA		
1402	Constantinople/ Get Out And Get Under The Moon	30,000
1441	Because My Baby Don't Mean Maybe Now	36,000
1441	Tain't So,Honey,Tain't So/That's My Weakness Now	29,650
1448	Lonesome In The Moonlight	30,000
1465	I'm On The Crest Of A Wave	24,275
1491	Georgie Porgie	21,525
1505	I'd Rather Cry Over You	21,125
1771	Louise	15,295
1822	Reaching For Someone	13,825
1845	Orange Blossom Time/Your Mother And Mine	13,800
1877	I'm In Seventh Heaven/Little Pal	12,000
1945	Oh, Miss Hannah	11,000
1974	Waiting At The End Of The Road	15,025
1993	At Twilight	12,025

Nellie Bly—A Record and an Interpretation

By George Jean Nathan

GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

(1882-1958)

From *The Theatre Book of the Year, 1945-1946* by the noted Broadway critic, George Jean Nathan, comes the final word on the ill-fated, Bing-Crosby-financed musical *Nellie Bly.* Although you might not be able to tell from his review which follows, Mr. Nathan actually loved the theatre and avidly supported what he felt were original, quality productions of merit. Obviously, *Nellie Bly* did not qualify in any of these categories. Luckily for us, Bing kept his day job and gave up his dream of becoming a Broadway impresario. M.S.

NELLIE BLY, JANUARY 21, 1946

A musical comedy in two acts by Joseph Quillan based on a story by Jack Emmanuel; lyrics by Johnny Burke; music by James Van Heusen; orchestration by Ted Royal and Elliott Jacoby; directed/staged by Edgar McGregor; choreography by Lee Sherman; musical supervision by Joseph Lilley; music directed by Charles Drury; settings and lighting by Nat Karson.

Produced by Nat Karson and Eddie Cantor for 16 performances at the Adelphi Theatre, New York. Closed February 2, 1946.

PROGRAM

PULITZER	*WALTER ARMIN*
BENNETT	*EDWARD H. ROBINS*
NEWSBOY	*WILLIAM O'SHAY*
FRANK JORDAN	*WILLIAM GAXTON*
FERRY CAPTAIN	*FRED PETERS*
DECKHAND	*HAROLD MURRAY*
PHINEAS T. FOGARTY	*VICTOR MOORE*
FIRST REPORTER	*ROBERT STRAUSS*
MURPHY	*ARTELLS DICKSON*
WARDHEELER	*JACK VOETH*
SECOND REPORTER	*LARRY STUART*
THIRD REPORTER	*EDDY DI GENOVA*
NELLIE BLY	*JOY HODGES*
BATTLE ANNIE	*BENAY VENUTA*
STEWARD	*LARRY STUART*
HONEYMOON COUPLE	*DORIS SWARD & JACK VOETH*
FRENCH GIRL	*DRUCILLA STRAIN*
GRISETTE	*LUBOV ROUDENKO*
FRENCH DANDY	*JACK WHITNEY*
FRENCH MAYOR	*WALTER ARMIN*
SANTOS-DUMONT	*FRED PETERS*
REPORTERS	*THE DEBONAIRS*
CZAR	*WALTER ARMIN*
RUSSIAN CAPTAIN	*FRED PETERS*
FIRST SHEIK	*ROBERT STRAUSS*
SECOND SHEIK	*EDWARD H. ROBINS*
THIRD SHEIK	*LARRY STUART*
OFFICIAL	*HAROLD MURRAY*
COPYGIRL	*SUZIE BAKER*

SYNOPSIS: Act I. Scene 1. *Barclay ferry slip, New York.* Scene 2. *In front of ferry house on Barclay Street.* Scene 3. *Battle Annie's saloon.* Scene 4. *City Hall Square.* Scene 5. *Steamship pier in Hoboken.* Scene 6. *The after deck.* Scene 7. *Stateroom the S.S. "Augusta Victoria."* Scene 8. *At gates of Paris Exposition.* Scene 9. *Paris Exposition.* Act II. Scene 1. *City room of the New York Herald.* Scene 2. *Stratosphere.* Scene 3. *Public square, Moscow.* Scene 4. *Street in Aden.* Scene 5. *The pass.* Scene 6. *Street in Aden.* Scene 7. *Somewhere in Texas.* Scene 8. *In transit.* Scene 9. *Barclay Street ferry slip.*

Time. *1889.*

STORY SYNOPSIS

Frank Jordan, managing editor of the New York *Herald,* is excited by the threat of a promotional beat staged by the New York *World.* The *World* assigns a reporter, Nellie Bly, to circle the globe in an attempt to beat the eighty-day record of Jules Verne. Jordan of the *Herald* engages Phineas T. Fogarty, who has been working as a "stable boy for the Hoboken Ferry," to race Nellie. To be sure Phineas doesn't loaf on the job, Jordan goes along and manages to fall in love with Miss Bly before the evening is well started.

MR. NATHAN'S REVIEW

IT IS RELIABLY REPORTED that the musical show, *Spring In Brazil,* which failed on the road to the tune of 300,000 dollars and was not brought to New York, suffered from so much rewriting that by the time it reached Chicago the only line remaining from the original book was, properly enough, "Good God, what an awful mess!" The insistence of the grimly vengeful leading comedian,

Milton Berle, is said to have been responsible for its retention, a compromise having being effected with the show's understandably obdurate producer in the elimination of the qualifying adjective "awful."

It is also reliably reported that this *Nellie Bly,* which was nevertheless brought into New York and failed to the same 300,000 dollar tune, underwent so much outside rewriting that the original authors, the Messrs. Ryskind and Herzig, wrathfully severed all connection with it on the road when the management declined to permit them to incorporate the line from *Spring in Brazil.* Just what the natal shape of the show was, I have no direct means of knowing, but it may be allowed from first-hand observation that one of the two dozen or so final troubles with it was that most of the people connected with it did not seem to know in the least what they were talking about. The gentleman now credited with the authorship of the book, for example, appeared to have confused the story of Nellie Bly with that of Stanley and Livingstone, to have mixed up James Gordon Bennett and Emile Gauvreau, and to have mistaken Joseph Pulitzer for Adam Forepaugh. The composer very evidently imagined that the French and Russians anticipated in the 1880's the Tin Pan Alley song rhythms of the Bing Crosby Hollywood films. And so on. Even Victor Moore, with William Gaxton at the head of the show's comedian department, was bedevilled in the general vertigo. In an interview before the opening, Mr. M. delivered himself thus: "It's not a critic's show — it's an audience show. I never heard so many belly-laughs! I play an Irishman for the first time in New York."

Mr. Moore's theory that a show full of belly-laughs would not be a critic's show is news. But if he heard a lot of belly-laughs he heard something that neither the critics nor the audience did. What the latter heard were rather only abdominal rumblings over such lines as his being so green from seasickness that he could give a transfusion to spinach, and being so ill that the rigor was just waiting for the mortis to set in. With the sharpest of reportorial ears, one further could not detect the slightest symptom of a belly-laugh anywhere in the house following such sallies as the wonderfulness of being the idol of Paris because it let one be idle, and as the impossibility of any woman's going around the world in seventy-odd days because it would take her that long to dress. Mr. Moore was deranged about even himself. If this was the first time he had ever appeared in New York as an Irishman, Kid Burns in *Forty-Five Minutes From Broadway* and *The Talk of New York* must have been a Czech.

Mr. Gaxton was similarly befouled by the contagion. "I play a newspaper man again for the third or fourth time. I still dress them up." When Mr. Gaxton imagines that his Hollywood ensembles constitute a wardrobe improvement upon the journalistic scene it is evident that he never heard of such sartorial dandies of the period as George Buchanan Fife, William C. Reick, Charles Lincoln, Herbert Bayard Swope, George Cooper, Nicholas Biddle, Hamilton Peltz, Richard Harding Davis, Algernon St. John Brenon, Frank Baker, and the embossed like.

Mr. Cantor, co-producer of the show, who supplied the major portion of the 300,000 dollars wasted on it, is further said to have been infected to the point of inserting into it divers additional humors which he esteemed as irresistible novelties and which amplified Mr. Moore's notion of sumptuous belly-laughs. As examples of their unsurpassed novelty may be cited a scene in which Mr. Moore was disguised as a harem siren and was made love to by an actor who believed that he was a female; another in which Mr. Moore stuffed his laundry into his bosom and observed that if he was going to drown in the sea he might as well get it washed free; still another in which Mr. Moore proclaimed that if he was lying to his female companion might St. Patrick send down a bolt of lightning and strike him, with the bolt promptly serving as a blackout; another still in which the desperately seasick and undone Mr. Moore was told "You give up too easily," with his retort, "I'll say I do!"; another yet in which Mr. Moore, carrying a pail of beer, was apprised that "It has a head on it" and his inquiry, "Is it anybody I know?" and such jocosities as "There's a south south-easter blowing from the north-west."

The first musical show use of the Jules Verne around-the-world-in-eighty-days idea was in an exhibit of that name at Niblo's Garden in 1885. It was apparently employed so well that the show became such a hit that various travesties, among them snacks like *Around Chicago In Eighty Minutes* appeared right and left. They seemingly did things much better in those days. *Nellie Bly* found itself in the unfortunate predicament of going around the world backwards.

Some Interesting Record Labels

Courtesy of Frank Whittaker

BINGsings

By Charles Baillie

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Friday, February 23, 2001 9

Bing is back!
Award-winning jazz critic Gary Giddins explains why recordings by 'the old groaner' deserve a second spin.

Two very prominent Bing supporters--Ernest Sutkowski of Saddle River, New Jersey, and Malcolm MacFarlane, Editor of "Bing," the I.C.C. magazine--have arrived at the same conclusion. Both feel that the excellent Bing biography by award-winning jazz critic Gary Giddins will spark renewed interest in record companies to re-issue Bing recordings and/or produce new ones. Mac is starting a campaign to have Crosby supporters with friends and contacts in the recording industry to encourage their participation, and Ernie has already located two good examples of re-issues that may have resulted from the excellent reviews of Gary's book.

The first CD that Ernie located is "Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings." The original LP version was released in 1956, and I acquired the Gold CD ultra-disc in 1996. Ernie assures me that the sound quality is excellent on this re-issue.

BING SINGS WHILST BREGMAN SWINGS $18.99*
(Verve CD 314 549 367-2)

*NOTE: Chick Wilson (Select Circles) indicates he has copies of the Japanese CD available for $18.00.

1. The Song Is You (3:54). 2. Mountain Greenery (3:36). 3. Cheek To Cheek (4:00). 4. 'Deed I Do (2:49). 5. Heat Wave (2:59). 6. Blue Room (2:21). 7. Have You Met Miss Jones? (2:28). 8. I've Got Five Dollars (3:13). 9. They All Laughed (2:39). 10. Nice Work If You Can Get It (2:34). 11. September In The Rain (2:55). 12. Jeepers Creepers (2:14).

The second CD--"The Bing Crosby Story, Vol. 1, The Early Jazz Years 1928-1932"--was also on LP with liner notes written 12/20/67. I acquired the original double CD--released by CBS Special Products--several years ago; and now the re-issue is from Sony Music Special Products. Ernie assures me that the sound quality is excellent on these discs which feature the "young" Bing in his jazz era.

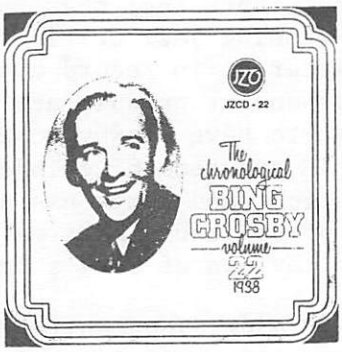
THE BING CROSBY STORY, VOL. 1, THE EARLY JAZZ YEARS 1928-1932
(CD WZK 75003 & WZK 75005)

1, Mississippi Mud. 2. Wa-Da-Da. 3. 'Tain't So, Honey, 'Tain't So. 4. My Suppressed Desire. 5. Makin' Whoopee! 6. I'll Get By (As Long As I Have You). 7. If I Had You. 8. Susianna. 9. Let's Do It, Let's Fall In Love. 10. The Spell Of The Blues. 11. My Kinda Love. 12. Till We Meet. 13. Louise (w/P. Whiteman O.). 14. Louise (w/Rhythm Boys). 15. I Kiss Your Hand, Madame. 16. Baby, Oh Where Can You Be? 17. Can't We Be Friends? 18. Without A Song. 19. Gay Love. 20. If I Had A Talking Picture Of You. 21. After You've Gone. 22. Sweet Sue, Just You. 23. You Brought A New Kind Of Love To Me. 24. Livin' In The Sunlight, Lovin' In The Moonlight. 25. St. Louis Blues (Take 1). 26. St. Louis Blues (Take 2). 27. How Long Will It Last? 28. My Woman. 29. Paradise. 30. Lord, You Made The Night Too Long. 31 Sweet Georgia Brown. 32. Cabin In The Cotton.

The next two CDs are the latest from the excellent Jonzo Series, "The Chronological Bing Crosby," produced in England by John McNicholas. Volumes 22 and 23 extend the series through 12/2/38. To order these limited editions, send your personal check or postal money order in U.S. funds for $20.00 each (which includes postage) to F.B. Wiggins, 5608 North 34th Street, Arlington, VA 22207.

JZCD - 22

1. ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND-A
2. ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND-B
3. HOME ON THE RANGE/TRUE CONFESSION-A
4. HOME ON THE RANGE/TRUE CONFESSION-B
5. SWEET HAWAIIAN CHIMES
6. LITTLE ANGEL
7. LET ME WHISPER I LOVE YOU (Murmullo)
8. DON'T BE THAT WAY
9. LITTLE LADY MAKE BELIEVE
10. WHEN MOTHER NATURE SINGS HER LULLABY
11. DARLING NELLIE GRAY
12. SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT
13. I'VE GOT A POCKETFUL OF DREAMS-Rej.
14. NOW IT CAN BE TOLD
15. IT'S THE DREAMER IN ME
16. DON'T LET THAT MOON GET AWAY-Rej.
17. SMALL FRY-A
18. SMALL FRY-B
19. MR. GALLAGHER AND MR. SHEAN-A
20. MR. GALLAGHER AND MR. SHEAN-B
21. SUMMERTIME-A
22. SUMMERTIME-B
23. A BLUES SERENADE-A
24. A BLUES SERENADE-Rej.



JZCD - 23

1. I'VE GOT A POCKETFUL OF DREAMS
2. DON'T LET THAT MOON GET AWAY
3. SILVER ON THE SAGE
4. LAUGH AND CALL IT LOVE
5. MEXICALI ROSE
6. YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY-A
7. YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY-B
8. YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY-C
9. OLD FOLKS-A
10. OLD FOLKS-B
11. MY REVERIE-A
12. MY REVERIE-B
13. YOU'RE A SWEET LITTLE HEADACHE
14. I HAVE EYES-A
15. I HAVE EYES-B
16. THE FUNNY OLD HILLS-A
17. THE FUNNY OLD HILLS-B
18. JOOBALAI-A
19. JOOBALAI-B
20. WHEN YOU'RE AWAY-A
21. WHEN YOU'RE AWAY-B
22. AH, SWEET MYSTERY OF LIFE-A
23. AH, SWEET MYSTERY OF LIFE-B
24. SWEETHEARTS-A
25. SWEETHEARTS-B

The next group of CDs is available from "Select Circles"--Chick Wilson, P.O. Box 302, Riverside, CT 06878 (Phone: 203-661-8421).

"Bing Crosby & Company" is a compilation of 24 tracks featuring Bing in duet with a variety of partners. The sound transfer is very good.

BING CROSBY & COMPANY $15.00
(Memoir Records, Ltd., England) (CD Moir 548)

TITLE	PARTNER
Dinah	The Mills Brothers
Mister Meadowlark	Johnny Mercer
The Waiter & The Porter & The Upstairs Maid	Mary Martin & Jack Teagarden
Gipsy Love Song	Frances Langford
The Whistler's Mother-in-Law	Muriel Lane
Everywhere You Go	Evelyn Knight
The Spaniard That Blighted My Life	Al Jolson
Lullaby	Jascha Heifetz
Once And For Always	Rhonda Fleming
You've Got Me Where You Want Me	Judy Garland
The Way You Look Tonight	Dixie Lee Crosby
Basin Street Blues	Connee Boswell
Bob White	Connee Boswell
Busy Doing Nothing	William Bendix & Cedric Hardwicke
Sunshine Cake	Carole Richards
Sam's Song	Gary Crosby
It's Been A Long Long Time	Les Paul & His Trio
Day By Day	Mel Torme & The Mel-Tones
Route 66	The Andrews Sisters
Be-Bop's Spoken Here	Patti Andrews
Pennies From Heaven	Frances Langford & Louis Armstrong
Ah 'Tis Sweet To Think	Ann Blyth
I Still Suits Me	Lee Wiley
A Couple Of Song And Dance Men	Fred Astaire

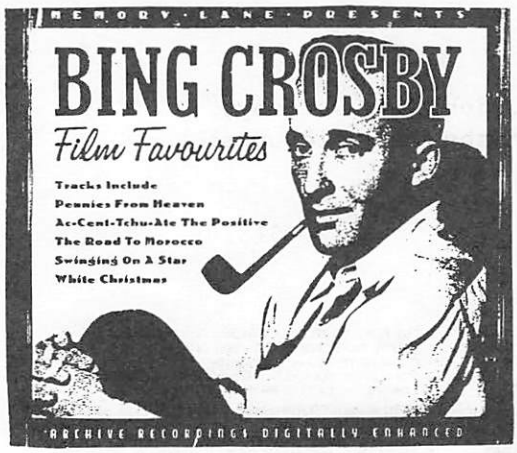
Another disc, also available from Select Circles, is "Classic Crosby, Vol. 1," a compilation of 18 tracks from original recordings 1930-1934. If you collect the Jonzo Series, you should already have all of these tracks. If not, it is an attractive collection to consider.

CLASSIC CROSBY, VOL. 1 $10.00
(Nostalgia NAXOS 8.120507)

Did You Ever See a Dream Walking?
Please
Where the Blue of the Night (Meets the Gold of the Day)
Thanks
Sweet and Lovely
It Must Be True
How Deep is the Ocean?
Young and Healthy
I Surrender Dear
I Found a Million Dollar Baby (In a Five & Ten Cent Store)
(I Don't Stand) A Ghost of a Chance (With You)
My Honey's Loving Arms
Temptation
Out of Nowhere
Black Moonlight
I've Got the World on a String
Love in Bloom
Down the Old Ox Road

"Bing Crosby, Film Favorites," is also available from Select Circles. The 16 tracks feature songs from a variety of Bing's movies from 1932 to 1945. The selections are attractive, and Chick indicates the sound is quite good.

BING CROSBY--FILM FAVORITES $ 9.00
(Prestige Records Ltd.--PGN-CD-820)



1. Please. 2. Love Is Just Around The Corner. 3. Down By The River. 4. Pennies From Heaven. 5. Sweet Leilani. 6. The Moon Got In My Eyes. 7. I've Got A Pocketful Of Dreams. 8. On The Sentimental Side. 9. Sing A Song Of Sunbeams. 10. Only Forever. 11. The Road To Morocco. 12. White Christmas. 13. Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive. 14. Going My Way. 15. Swinging On A Star. 16. The Bells Of St. Mary's.

The next CD--"Bing & Al Volume 3"--is also available from Select Circles. It features two of Bing's 1950 Chesterfield radio shows with Al Jolson as guest star and Fred Allen and Peggy Lee also performing. HLC Records has produced a series of Bing's classic radio shows digitally re-mastered for CD. The transfer is good.

BING & AL VOLUME 3 (HLC Records 6650) $18.00

Bing Crosby Show (CBS) February 8, 1950
1) Show Open 2) Sunshine Cake (Bing & Peggy Lee) 3) A Dream Is A Wish Your Heart Makes (Peggy) 4) Fred Allen, Retired 5) Lonesome In The Saddle (Bing & Fred) 6) A Word For Chesterfield 7) Why Remind Me? (Bing) 8) Fred, Bing & Jolie!

Bing Crosby Show (CBS) January 4, 1950
9) Show Open 10) Dear Hearts And Gentle People 11) "LOOK" At Chesterfield 12) Bye Bye Baby (Bing) 13) Is It True What They Say About Dixie? (Al Jolson) 14) Bing And Al Visit 15) Carolina In The Morning (Bing & Al) 16) My Blue Heaven (Bing & Al) 17) Alabamy Bound (Bing & Al) 18) Sold On Chesterfield 19) The One I Love Belongs To Somebody Else (Bing & Al) 20) All By Myself 21) Show Close

Bing's Blow-Up Takes (Contains Adult Language)
22) Jimmy Valentine 23) Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams 24) The Seventh Air Force

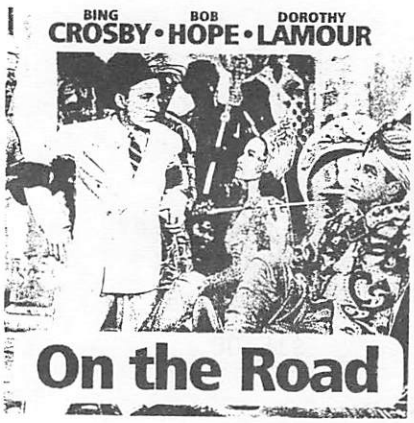
The next two CDs were purchased from Virgin Records in San Francisco on Christmas Day. (Virgin was the only store open for business on that day.) The first CD, "Bing Crosby & Friends--Tribute to Irving Berlin," is from the soundtrack of the movie "Blue Skies," including all the actual recordings plus material that was cut from the movie. Jim Reilly in "BING" magazine's "Keeping Track" column identifies these as Say It Isn't So/What'll I Do/All Alone/Remember/I'm Putting All My Eggs in One Basket/Cheek to Cheek/and God Bless America. While not all the numbers are complete or sung by Bing, it's an interesting, well-recorded disc.

BING CROSBY & FRIENDS--TRIBUTE TO IRVING BERLIN $12.99
(Columbia River Entertainment Group) (CRG 180002)

1. Everybody Step. 2. A Couple Of Song And Dance Men. 3. I've Got My Captain Working For Me Now. 4. Getting Nowhere. 5. Say It Isn't So. 6. I'll See You in C-U-B-A. 7. You'd Be Surprised. 8. Puttin' On The Ritz. 9. Heat Wave. 10. Blue Skies. 11. You Keep Coming Back Like A Song / What'll I Do? / All Alone / Remember. 12. I'm Putting All My Eggs In One Basket / Cheek To Cheek / All By Myself. 13. Any Bonds Today / This Is The Army / White Christmas / God Bless America. 14. Serenade To An Old-Fashioned Girl. 15. The Little Things In Life / Not For All The Rice In China / Russian Lullaby. 16. You Keep Coming Back Like A Song.

The second disc from Virgin Records, "On the Road--Bing, Bob, and Dorothy," gives us a good transfer of the soundtracks from five of the Road pictures: Singapore, Zanzibar, Morocco, Utopia, and Rio.

BING CROSBY, BOB HOPE, DOROTHY LAMOUR--ON THE ROAD $18.99
(Vintage Jazz -- VJB 1949-2)



Bob and Bing's "pat-a-cake" routine in The Road to Singapore

VJB 1949-2

BING CROSBY, BOB HOPE AND DOROTHY LAMOUR ON THE ROAD

ROAD TO SINGAPORE (Released 23 March 1940)
1. OVERTURE
2. CAPTAIN CUSTARD vcl Bob Hope & Bing Crosby
3. THE MOON & THE WILLOW TREE vcl Dorothy Lamour
4. SWEET POTATO PIPER vcl Bing Crosby
5. TOO ROMANTIC vcl Bing Crosby & Dorothy Lamour
6. TOO ROMANTIC vcl Bing Crosby
7. PAT-A-CAKE & CLOSING

ROAD TO ZANZIBAR (Released 11 April 1941)
8. OVERTURE/ YOU LUCKY PEOPLE YOU vcl Bing Crosby
9. THE ROAD TO ZANZIBAR vcl Bing Crosby & Chorus
10. YOU'RE DANGEROUS vcl Dorothy Lamour
11. IT'S ALWAYS YOU vcl Bing Crosby
12. IT'S ALWAYS YOU vcl Bing Crosby, Bob Hope & Dorothy Lamour
13. SAWING THE LADY IN HALF & CLOSING

ROAD TO MOROCCO (Released 5 October 1942)
14. OVERTURE
15. ROAD TO MOROCCO vcl Bing Crosby & Bob Hope
16. AIN'T GOT A DIME TO MY NAME (HO-HUM) vcl Bing Crosby
17. CONSTANTLY vcl Dorothy Lamour
18. MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU vcl Bing Crosby
19. MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU vcl Dorothy Lamour, Bob Hope & Bing Crosby
20. CAMEL TALK & CLOSING

ROAD TO UTOPIA (Released 25 January 1946)
21. OVERTURE
22. GOODTIME CHARLIE vcl Bing Crosby & Bob Hope
23. IT'S ANYBODY'S SPRING vcl Bing Crosby
24. PERSONALITY vcl Dorothy Lamour
25. WELCOME TO MY DREAM vcl Bing Crosby
26. PUT IT THERE PAL vcl Bing Crosby & Bob Hope
27. WOULD YOU? vcl Dorothy Lamour
28. CLOSING

ROAD TO RIO (Released 25 December 1947)
29. OVERTURE
30. WE'RE ON OUR WAY vcl Bing Crosby & Bob Hope
31. BUT BEAUTIFUL vcl Bing Crosby
32. YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW THE LANGUAGE vcl Bing Crosby & The Andrew Sisters
33. EXPERIENCE vcl Dorothy Lamour
34. CLOSING

The next CD--"Bing Crosby--Blitz Hits"--commemorates songs popular during the Blitz in England in WWII. It's a good compilation, and Jim Reilly indicates that tracks #4, 6, 9, 13, 14 and 17 have had limited exposure on CD. (Available from Chick Wilson, Select Circles.)

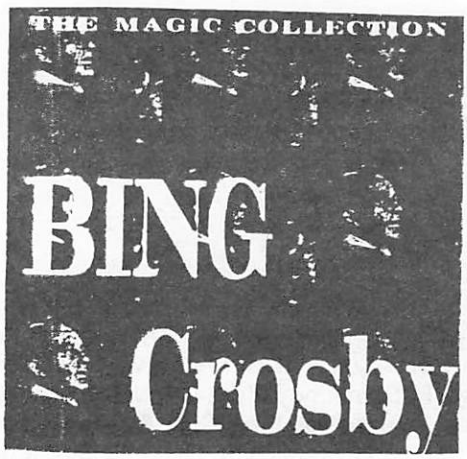
BING CROSBY--BLITZ HITS (Spectrum 544-263-2) $11.00

Bing Crosby Blitz Hits
1. Sing A Song Of Sunbeams
2. I Haven't Time To Be A Millionaire
3. Meet The Sun Halfway
4. There's A Gold Mine In The Sky
5. A Man And His Dream
6. The Singing Hills
7. Yours Is My Heart Alone
8. Sweet Potato Piper
9. Thine Alone

Spectrum 544 263-2
10. My Melancholy Baby
11. I Surrender Dear
12. Still The Bluebird Sings
13. April Played The Fiddle
14. Alla En El Rancho Grande
15. Sierra Sue
16. Too Romantic
17. Miss You
18. You Are My Sunshine

Canterbury Records in Pasadena was the source of the next record--"Bing Crosby, The Magic Collection." It is a nice compilation of 18 standards from Bing's early years. Most of the tracks have been on CD many times, but it is a nice collection <u>if</u> it fits in <u>your</u> collection. The price is certainly right.

BING CROSBY--THE MAGIC COLLECTION (MEC-949001 Holland) $ 5.99



1. Where The Blue Of The Night Meets The Gold Of The Day (Ahlert-Turk-Crosby). 2. I Found A Million-Dollar Baby (Warren-Rose-Dixon). 3. At Your Command (Barris-Tobias-Crosby). 4. Dancing In The Dark (Schwartz-Dietz). 5. Now That You're Gone (Fio Rito-Kahn). 6. Too Late (Young-Lewis). 7. Sweet and Lovely (Arnheim-Tobias-Lemare). 8. A Faded Summer Love ((Baxter). 9. Just One More Chance (Johnston-Coslow). 10. I'm Through With Love (Malneck-Livingston-Kahn). 11. Out Of Nowhere (Green-Heyman). 12. Good Night Sweetheart (Nobel-Campbell-Connelly). 13. I Apologize (Hoffman-Goodhart-Nelson). 14. Star Dust (Carmichael-Parish). 15. Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (Barris-Koehler-Moll). 16. Just A Gigolo (Casucci-Caesar). 17. I Surrender Dear (Barris-Clifford). 18. If You Should Ever Need Me (Burke-Dubin)..

The next three discs are available from Select Circles. The first, "Bing Crosby: Oslo, Norway Concert," includes three bonus tracts from the Bell Telephone Hour telecast of 3/28/76 with Bing, Liza Minnelli and Ben Vereen. The sound is good.

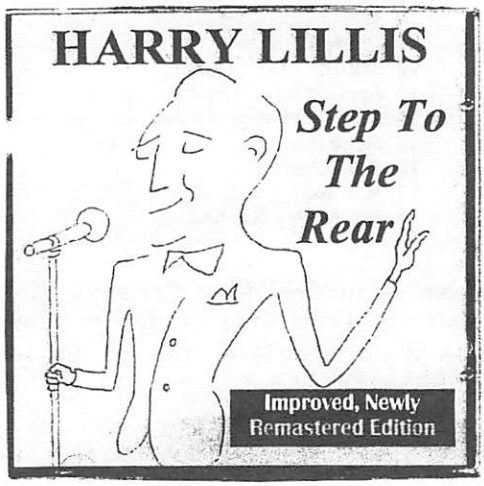
BING CROSBY: OSLO, NORWAY CONCERT, 8/27/77 $16.00
(Der Bingle, BC 104)

BING CROSBY OSLO, NORWAY
AUGUST 27, 1977
1. Everything's Coming Up Roses instrumental
2. Crosby introduction
3. Feels Good
4. Crosby introduces band: Joe Bushkin-piano, Jay Pana-drums, George Duvivier-bass, Johnny Smith- guitar
5. Now You Has Jazz
6. Jazz instrumental
7. Medley Of Hits: I Surrender Dear, Swinging On A Star, Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams, Dear Heart and Gentle People, True Love, Don't Fence Me In, Pennies From Heaven, Blue Hawaii, Sweet Leilani, Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral, Just One More Chance, Them There Eyes, Moonlight Becomes You, You Are My Sunshine, I'll Be Seeing You, Basin Street Blues, Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive, Please, Baby Face, South of the Border, Galway Bay, Play A Simple Melody/ Gone Fishin' [last two with Harry Crosby] contents continued inside

MEDLEY CONTINUED
San Fernando Valley[parody], I Found A Million Dollar Baby, New San Antonio Rose, I'm An Old Cowhand, In A Little Spanish Town, Wait Till the Sun Shines Nellie, It's Easy to Remember, It's Been A Long, Long Time, Blue Skies, White Christmas, Ol' Man River
8. Going My Way[parody]
9. Norwegian Folk Song
10. Everything's Come Up Roses instrumental
11. The Way We Were
12. Quando Caliente del Sol
13. Award Ceremony
14. Dinah
Bell Telephone Hour March 28, 1976
15. The Way We Were/Yesterday w/ Liza Minnelli
16. Now You Has Jazz w/ Ben Vereen
17. Well Did Ya' Evah ! [special lyrics] w/ Liza Minnelli

The second CD is an "improved, newly-mastered edition of "Harry Lillis, Step to the Rear." Those of you who have the original CD probably remember that the two tracks from "Guys & Dolls" featuring Bing, Frank, and Dean is fine of Bing and Frank, but Dean sounds like he was locked in a closet in another studio! If you <u>don't</u> have this CD, I recommend it highly. If you <u>do</u> have it, you may still want to consider the "improved" version.

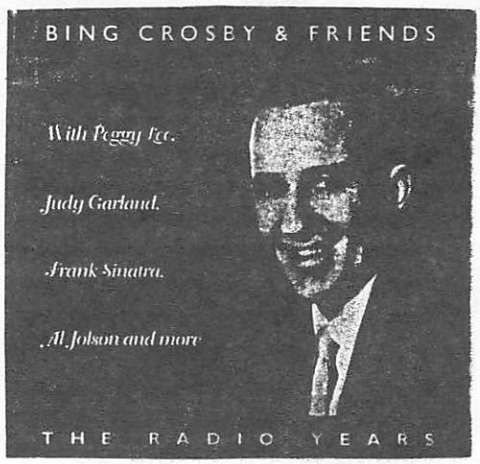
HARRY LILLIS, STEP TO THE REAR $16.00
(HLY CD-001A)



1. Seven Nights A Week. 2. Man On Fire. 3. Paris Holiday. 4. Nothing In Common. 5. I Couldn't Care Less. 6. Say One For Me. 7. Secret Of Christmas. 8. The Music Of Home. 9. The New Ashmolian Marching Society. 10. It's A Good Day. 11. Aloha Means I Love You. 12. Incurably Romantic. 13. The Second Time Around. 14. Fugue For Tinhorns. 15. The Oldest Established. 16. Something Sort Of Grandish. 17. Younger Than Springtime. 18. Christmas Dinner Country Style. 19. Do You Hear What I Hear? 20. The White World Of Winter. 21. Far From Home. 22. How Green Was My Valley. 23. Step To The Rear. 24. What Do We Do With The World? 25. It's Not Where You Start. 26. Tie A Yellow Ribbon 'Round The Old Oak Tree. 27. Christmas Star. 28. We Love Old St. Mary's.

The third disc available from "Select Circles" is "Bing Crosby & Friends, The Radio Years." There are some very good tracks on this CD, and a few that are with Hollywood celebrities who are really not singers! All in all, it is an interesting compilation.

BING CROSBY & FRIENDS, THE RADIO YEARS $ 7.50
(Hallmark 303372)



1. If I Knew You Were Coming I'd Have Baked A Cake (w/Bob Hope). 2. On A Slow Boat To China (w/Peggy Lee). 3. When You Wore A Tulip (w/Judy Garland). 4. Moonlight Bay (w/Gary Crosby). 5. I Don't Know Why (w/Lauren Bacall). 6. The One I Love Belongs To Somebody Else (w/Al Jolson). 7. May The Good Lord Bless And Keep You (w/Nat King Cole & The Andrews Sisters). 8. Basin Street Blues (w/Ella Fitzgerald). 9. Hand Holdin' Music (w/Rudy Vallee & Walter O'Keefe). 10. Up A Lazy River / Paper Doll (w/The Mills Bros.). 11. On Top Of Old Smoky (w/Burl Ives). 12. Medley: You're The Top / You Are My Sunshine / Sonny Boy / You're The Top (w/Frank Sinatra & Bob Hope). 13. Clancy Lowered The Boom (w/Dennis Day). 14. Takes Two To Tango (w/Rosemary Clooney). 15. You Came A Long Way From St. Louis (w/Peggy Lee). 16. I Can Dream, Can't I? (w/Andrews Sisters). 17. Lullaby Of Broadway (w/Dick Powell). 18. The Surrey With The Fringe On Top (w/Helen O'Connell). 19. Till We Meet Again (w/Patti Page). 20. Groaner Canary And Nose ((w/Judy Garland & Jimmy Durante).

We have not heard recently from two of our better sources--"Blue Lantern Records" and "The Redmond Nostalgia Co."--but Vintage Research Archives, 5 Beach Drive, Baltimore, MD 21222-4925, (Tim Morgereth) has been quite busy developing new Bing material. Space limitations preclude listing the catalog, but many excellent cassettes and videos have been added in the past few months. Tim indicates full catalogs are available for $3.00 U.S./$5.00 foreign.

The final disc to report on in this issue, "Bing Crosby, Song Hits from the Movies 1930--1953." was purchased at Canterbury Records in Pasadena. (While it is not included in the latest listing from "Select Circles," if interested, you may want to check with Chick Wilson.)

The sound on this CD is excellent. It was recorded in "digital stereo" by Robert Parker in Sydney, Australia, from 78 RPM originals. The result is very good. While most of the tracks have appeared frequently on CD, there are a few exceptions, and I recommend the disc due to the quality of the recording.

BING CROSBY, SONG HITS FROM THE MOVIES, 1930--1953 $11.99
(Nimbus-NI 2013)

1. So The Bluebirds and the Blackbirds Got Together. 2. Where The Blue Of The Night. 3. Please. 4. Black Moonlight. 5. Pennies From Heaven. 6. Sweet Leilani. 7. The Pessimistic Character. 8. Only Forever. 9. White Christmas. 10. The Road To Morocco. 11. Moonlight Becomes You. 12. Ain't Got A Dime To My Name. 13. Sunday, Monday Or Always. 14. Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby? 15. Going My Way. 16. Swinging On A Star. 17. Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral. 18. Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive. 19. Adeste Fideles. 20. Put It There, Pal. 21. Country Style. 22. If You Stub Your Toe On The Moon. 23. De Camptown Races. 24. The Whiffenpoof Song.

Inasmuch as I won't be writing another "BINGSINGS" column until year-end, I decided to include information on several CDs that I have not reviewed. The "Collectors' Choice Music" catalog just arrived as I was about to send the column to Wayne, so I'm including the data for your information. If you wish to order any of these CDs, the toll-free number is 1-800-933-1122.

Early 'n' Late Bing Crosby!

New Exclusive BING CROSBY: The Lost Columbia Sides 1928–33
Few artists can claim a catalog as rich and varied as Bing Crosby's; the various compilations both in and out of print have barely scratched the surface of his awe-inspiring recorded legacy. But this one'll at least put a nice dent in that-there legacy—34 tracks, NONE EVER BEFORE ON CD, including 13 chart hits! This material covers Bing's late-'20s/early-'30s solo recordings as well as vocal work credited to Paul Whiteman, the Dorsey Brothers and other notable outfits of the day, and we've annotated it for you to follow along with the early triumphs of one of the great voices of the 20th century. A *Collectors' Choice Music* exclusive, out June 26!

Includes *From Monday On; Mississippi Mud* Frankie Trumbauer & His Orchestra; *La Paloma; La Golondrina; 'Tain't So, Honey, 'Tain't So; I'd Rather Cry over You (Than Smile over Something Else); Coquette; Louise; When My Dreams Come True; Reaching for Someone (and Not Finding Anyone); S'posin'; Great Day; Without a Song; If I Had a Talking Picture of You; A Bundle of Old Love Letters; After You've Gone; Livin' in the Sunlight, Lovin' in the Moonlight; You Brought a New Kind of Love to Me* Paul Whiteman & His Orchestra; *The Spell of the Blues; Let's Do It (Let's Fall in Love)* Dorsey Brothers Orchestra; *I'll Get By (As Long as I Have You)* Ipana Troubadours; *Susianna; If I Had You* Sam Lanin & His Orchestra; *St. Louis Blues* with Duke Ellington & His Famous Orchestra; *Cabin in the Cotton; The Last Round-Up* with Lennie Hayton & His Orchestra, and the solo sides *My Kinda Love; Till We Meet; I Kiss Your Hand, Madame; Baby, Oh Where Can You Be; Can't We Be Friends?; Gay Love; How Long Will It Last?*, and *My Woman*.
HKCCM02162 2CD **$24.95**
HKCCM02164 2CS **$19.95**

New Exclusive BING CROSBY: That Travelin' Two-Beat/Sings the Great Country Hits
These two 1965 Capitol albums present two sides of Bing that richly deserve reissue in our humble opinion! Bing, Billy May and Rosemary Clooney put their heads together for the Dixieland-style *That Travelin' Two-Beat*, which includes both songs identified with the style and swingin' takes on tunes (like Johann Strauss' *Tales of the Vienna Woods*) that you wouldn't ordinarily place anywhere near New Orleans! *The Great Country Hits*, meanwhile, backs Bing with a great band led by Bill Justis for interpretations of some of the most hallowed songs in the country canon. A *Collectors' Choice Music* exclusive!

The title song leads off *That Travelin' Two-Beat*, followed by *New Vienna Woods; Knees Up, Mother Brown; Roamin' in the Gloamin'; Adios Señorita; Come to the Mardi Gras; Hear that Band; The Daughter of Molly Malone; The Poor People of Paris; I Get Ideas; Ciao, Ciao, Bambina*, and *That Travelin' Two-Beat* (Reprise). *The Great Country Hits* includes *Oh Lonesome Me; Heartaches by the Numbers; Four Walls; Crazy Arms; Bouquet of Roses; Wabash Cannon Ball; Wolverton Mountain; Hello Walls; A Little Bitty Tear; Jealous Heart; Still*, and *Sunflower*. 24 tracks, out June 26!
HKCCM02212 CD **$16.95**
HKCCM02214 CS **$12.95**

Bing Crosby!

New Import **BING CROSBY: Don't Fence Me In—22 #1 Hits**
Includes *White Christmas; Pennies from Heaven; Please; Don't Fence Me In; Now Is the Hour; Swinging on a Star; Dinah; Out of Nowhere; Three Little Words*, and more.
HKPLS03812 CD **$9.95**
HKPLS03814 CS **$5.95**

New Import **BING CROSBY: Anything Goes**
Over 40 tracks from the most popular artist of the first half of this century! Includes *Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone; Straight Down the Middle; Way Down Yonder in New Orleans*, and many more!
HKPLS05322 2CD **$13.95**

BING CROSBY & ROSEMARY CLOONEY: Rendezvous
Includes *On a Slow Boat to China; You Came a Long Way from St. Louis; I Can't Get Started*, and more.
HKLAS61282 CD **$9.95**

New Import **BING CROSBY: The Old Lamplighter**
Includes *Lady of Spain; Temptation; If This Isn't Love; Great Day*, and more.
HKTIM37382 CD **$9.95**

Editor's Note: The issue of "The Lost Columbia Sides" was delayed by CCM, and it appears likely that not all the tracks listed in the catalog and on their website will be on the CD.

BING sings

The Stanford Theatre

221 University Avenue, Palo Alto (650) 324-3700

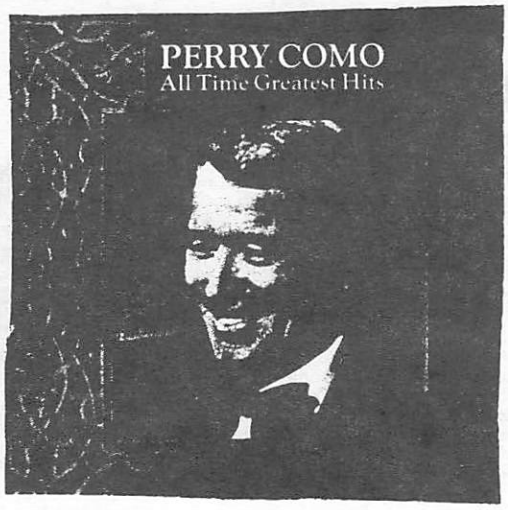
The following is a bit out of pattern for my normal report--but I thought it would be of interest to our San Francisco Bay area members. My son, who is a Stanford University graduate, a movie buff, and a San Francisco resident, called me to report a "Bing Crosby sighting." Seems the Stanford Theatre--"which is dedicated to the preservation and public exhibition of films from the Golden Age of Hollywood"--was presenting a series of 106 musicals originally released in the years 1929 through 1950. These included The Big Broadcast (1932), Too Much Harmony (1933), Going Hollywood (1933), We're Not Dressing (1934), The Big Broadcast of 1936 (1935), Star Spangled Rhythm (1943), and six of the seven "Road" pictures--all but Hong Kong.

While this "notice" is a bit late for this series, I thought you might like to put your name on the theatre mailing list for future showings. Tickets for double features are $6.00 for adults, $4.00 for seniors over 65, and $3.00 for youth under 18. While all of the Crosby films are available on video, it is nice to see them again on the big screen.

Perry Como, Soothing Pop Crooner, Dies at 87

Associated Press

Perry Como, in 1957 photo, wearing his familiar cardigan.



I want to close with a tribute to Bing's friend, Perry, who went to join Bing last month. Perry always insisted that, if it hadn't been for Bing, whose style he copied, he would still be "cutting hair in Altoona, Pa." Perry and Bing appeared on each other's TV shows singing duets and sharing songs. When Bing died, Perry made an LP of Bing's songs and dedicated it to him. He also appeared on TV with the Boston Pops in a salute to Bing--again singing Bing's songs and ending the program with "The Wind Beneath My Wings" with a big picture of Bing on the screen behind him.

When I was a senior in high school in South Bend, Indiana, my girlfriend (later my wife) and I went to the local dance pavilion to hear and dance to Ted Weems' Orchestra. Weems had just signed a new young singer by the name of Perry Como. I became a fan of his, second only to Bing, from that day forward. May he rest in peace, and join Bing for another songfest.

Charlie

Charles D. Baillie
118 W. Las Flores Ave.
Arcadia, CA 91007
(626) 446-2246

SWAPS AND SUCH

SHEET MUSIC, MAGAZINES, ADS, PHOTOS and other Crosby collectibles. Priced low (most $2-$3) because I want them to go to other Crosby fans. Send for list. Richard Duncan, 849 Dominion Lane, Salem, VA 24153.

BING CROSBY ITEMS. Some miscellaneous Crosby items, such as loose leaf folders, various listings, scrap books and such, that I would like to pass on to someone who is interested. Stanley Wayman, 18 Beckerle St., Danbury, CT 06811-4608.

I HAVE A NUMBER of magazines for sale with *Bing Crosby* in them from the 1930's through the 1970's. For a list, send SASE to Howard Rogofsky, P.O. Box 107, Glen Oaks, NY 11004, phone 718-723-0954 (6:00 p.m. to midnight, E.S.T.).

FOR SALE: I have a number of *Song Hit* magazines with Bing's picture on the cover, also a lot of odd items, including the French *Reader's Digest* of 12/64 with Bing on the inside back cover, *Movie Story* of 9/39 featuring "The Star Maker," etc. Aggie Carroll, 145 North 234d St., Kenilworth, NJ 07033.

BING CROSBY COLLECTORS: Looking for a permanent home for your Bing Crosby collection? Donate your collection to the Stapleton Bing Crosby Collection in the John J. Ward Irish Music Archives in Milwaukee, WI. Tax deductible! Call Barry Stapleton at (414) 645-6019.

WANTED: The three 45s issued with Bing and Xavier Cugat; two Bob Crosby Dixieland LP's issued on Coral; Bob Crosby 78 on Bell with "Steam Heat" and "Happy Wanderer." Dennis Nale, 3335 Latham Drive, Dallas, TX 75229-3847.

New Tapes Available

We are continuing to add new Bing Crosby audio and video tapes to our catalog. Here are just a few of our new videos:

VRA-872 — Bing on Perry Como KMH, 16 March 60
VRA-877 — Bing's 50th Anniversary Special
VRA-890 — Bing on Dean Martin Show, 13 Apr 67
VRA-895 — Bing's Norway Concert, 27 Aug 77

Videos are $8.00 each (U.S.A.) and $12.00 each (foreign), including shipping. For complete audio and video catalog, send $3.00 for U.S.A. and $5.00 for foreign countries.

Timothy Morgereth
c/o The Vintage Research Archive
5 Beach Drive, Inverness
Baltimore, MD 21222-4925 U.S.A.

OTHER CROSBY ORGANIZATIONS

BING'S FRIENDS AND COLLECTORS SOCIETY
Hobie and Cathie Wilson
236 Andrieux St.
Sonoma, CA 95476; E-mail: Erinssmile@earthlink.net
Web site: http://home.earthlink.net/~erinssmile/

INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE (U.K.)
F. B. Wiggins, U.S. Representative
5608 North 34th St.
Arlington, VA 22207
E-mail for *Bing* editor: Macwilmslo@aol.com
Web site: www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~icccircle

CRISSI NEWTON'S WEB SITE: http://www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/3754/bing.html

OTHER FAN CLUBS OF INTEREST

EDDIE CANTOR APPRECIATION SOCIETY
President: Michelle Malik
14611 Valley Vista Blvd.
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403; E-mail: cantorfan@aol.com

DICK HAYMES SOCIETY
c/o Roger L. Dooner
2951 Tyler St., NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

INTERNATIONAL AL JOLSON SOCIETY
John Wehrman, President
1195 Hickory Hill Drive
Green Bay, WI 54304; E-mail: JWWehrman@aol.com

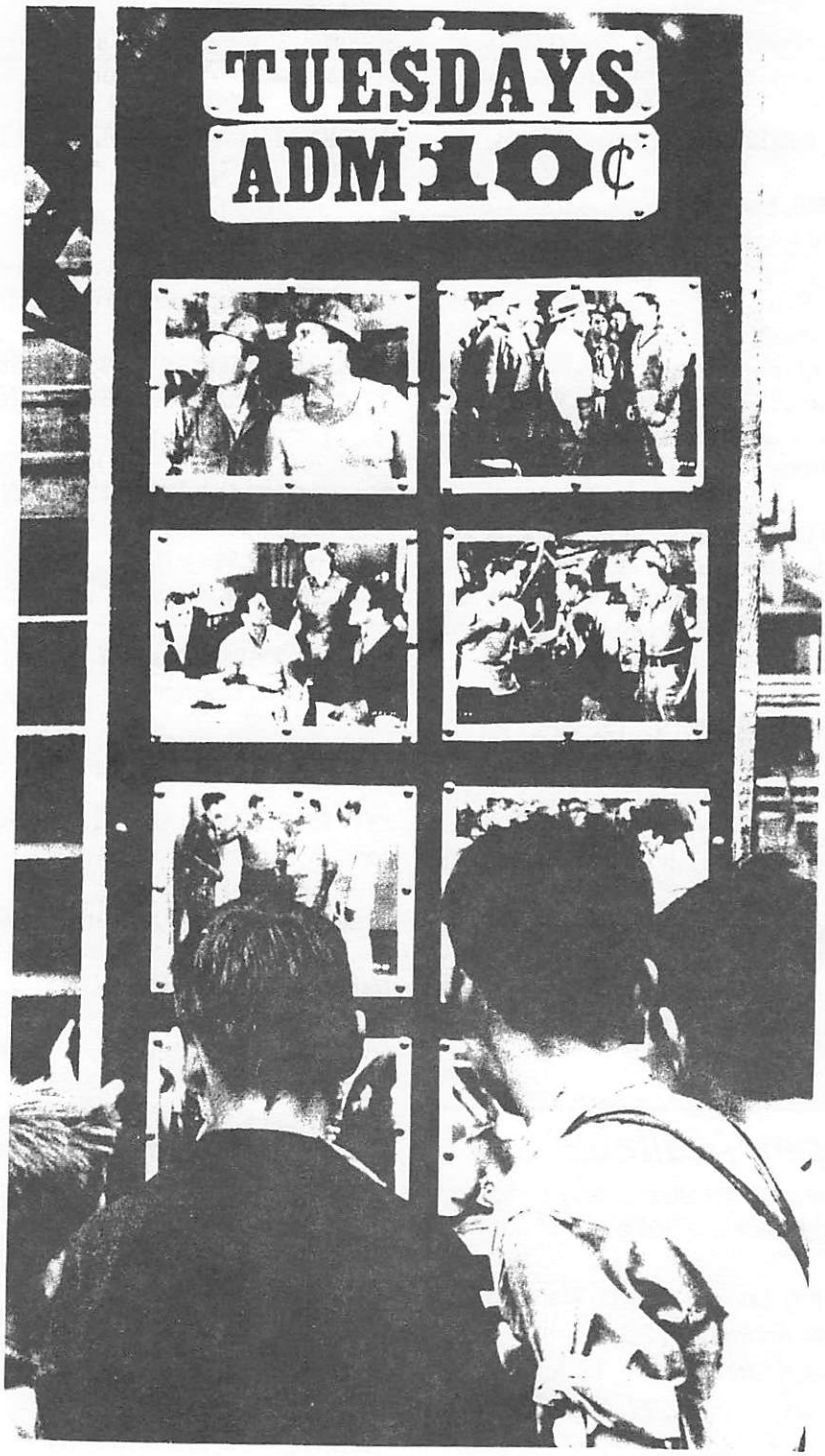
MILLS BROTHERS SOCIETY
c/o Daniel Clemson
604 N. Market Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-2727
E-mail: MillsBros1@aol.com
Web site: www.cumberlink.com/mills

INTERNATIONAL SINATRA SOCIETY
P. O. Box 7176
Lakeland, FL 33807-7176; E-mail fs@sinatraclub.com
Web site: www.sinatraclub.com

SINATRA SOCIETY OF AMERICA
P. O. Box 2705
Toluca Lake, CA 91610-0705
Web site: www.FrankSinatra.com

KATE SMITH COMMEMORATIVE SOCIETY
P. O. Box 3575
Cranston, RI 02910

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FAN CLUBS
P. O. Box 4340
Oceanside, CA 92052-4340; E-mail: LKNAFC@aol.com



This picture from 1940-1941 shows a group of young men eyeballing a display of 8x10 glossy stills from Bing's 1940 film *If I Had My Way*. The price is certainly right to see one of Bing's lesser known pictures. They'll also get to see the missing reel Gary Giddins has been seeking.